Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-92-035
Friday
21 February 1992

Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-92-035 21 February 1992

CONTENTS

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

FRONT PAGE

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League Holds Emergency Talks on Settlements *[MENA]* 3
Statement Issued *[MENA]* 3
Statement on Israeli 'Aggression' *[MENA]* 3
Palestinians Expect Better Ties With Saudis *[AL-DUSTUR 20 Feb]* 4
ICRC: Iran-Iraq Prisoner Exchange To Resume *[AFP]* 4

Islamic Affairs

JANA Interviews Islamic Bank Official 4

Palestinian Affairs

PLO Says Jibril 'Architect' of Lockerbie Bombing *[MENA]* 5
'Arafat Says 'No Arab Coordination' in Talks *[London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI 18 Feb]* 6
Abu-Sharif Warns Against U.S. Loans to Israel *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 14 Feb]* 9
Qaddumi Emphasizes Need To Halt Settlements *[AL-RA'Y 20 Feb]* 11
U.S. Attitude Toward Israeli 'Violence' Scored *[Algiers VOP]* 12
Editorial Urges 'Immediate' U.S. Settlement Action *[AL-SHA'B 20 Feb]* 12
Conditions in Territories 'Worse Than Ever' *[AL-FAJR 17 Feb]* 12
DFLP Issues Statement Marking 23d Anniversary *[Algiers VOP]* 13

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

Boudiaf Calls for Stability, Economic Growth *[Paris TV]* 14
FIS—14,000 Arrested; Detainees Tortured *[AFP]* 14
Officials Close Blida University After Protests *[Algiers Radio]* 15
Al-Nahdah Party Paper Confiscated *[Algiers Radio]* 15
Attackers Assault Police; Search Under Way *[Algiers Radio]* 15
6 Billion Franc French Loan Available in March *[Algiers Radio]* 15

Egypt

Mubarak Receives Syrian Chief of Staff in Cairo *[MENA]* 15
Syria 'Ready' To Help Lebanon *[MENA]* 16
Al-Baz Meets U.S. Envoy, Condemns Israel *[MENA]* 16
Editorials, Commentaries on Lebanon Situation 16
AL-AKHBAR Assails U.S. Role *[MENA]* 16
Warns Shamir on 'Playing With Fire' *[Cairo Radio]* 16
Sees 'Hidden Goals' *[MENA]* 16
AL-AHRAM Views 'Sudden Explosion' *[Cairo Radio]* 17
'Greater' Deterrent Required *[Cairo Radio]* 17
Commentary on 'Resorting to Jungle Law' *[Cairo Radio]* 17
Muslim Brotherhood Condemns al-Musawi Killing *[IRNA]* 18
'Muslim Militants' Reportedly Clash With Police *[AFP]* 18

Columnist Sees 'Nuclear Embargo' on Islamic World *[AL-AHRAM 11 Feb]* 18
Mubarak Sends Letter to Qatari Amir on Relations *[Cairo Radio]* 19
Romanian State Secretary Visits, Meets Officials 19
Meets Musa, al-Baz *[Cairo Radio]* 19
Views Exchanged *[Bucharest ROMPRES]* 19
Delegation Departs *[MENA]* 19
Musa, Romanian Justice Official Discuss Cooperation *[MENA]* 19
Diplomatic Relations With Moldova Planned *[Cairo Radio]* 20

Libya

Judge Threatens To Halt Lockerbie Investigation *[London MBC TV]* 20
'Suicide Operations' Planned With Egyptian Groups *[AL-SHIRA' 10 Feb]* 20
Al-Bishari on Lockerbie, Palestinians, Peace *[AL-DIYAR 8 Feb]* 20
Oil Output Cut by 10 Percent in Line With Pact *[JANA]* 24
Arab Media Delegate on Lockerbie 'Smear Campaign' *[JANA]* 24

Tunisia

Government Condemns Israeli 'Aggression' in Lebanon *[Tunis Radio]* 25

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Bahrain

Algeria's Brahimi Touring Gulf To Brief Leaders *[WAKH]* 26

Oman

Algerian Foreign Minister Arrives for Talks *[Muscat Radio]* 26

Republic of Yemen

Two Ruling Party Members Said Killed 7 Feb *[INA]* 26

Saudi Arabia

Oppositionist al-Shaykh Views Pressure for Reform
[London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI 19 Feb] 26

IRAQ

Ambassadors' Conference Concludes 20 Feb *[INA]* 29
Impact of Israeli Raids on Peace Process Viewed *[Baghdad Voice of Palestine]* 29
U.S. Media Launching 'New Conspiratorial Act' *[AL-QADISIYAH 14 Feb]* 29
Talabani Interviewed on PUK Conference, Elections *[Voice of Kurdistan]* 30

ISRAEL

IDF Ends Operation North of Security Zone *[Jerusalem Radio]* 32
Operation Met 'All Objectives' *[Jerusalem Radio]* 32
Two Soldiers Killed; Three Injured *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 32
Katyushas Hit Security Zone Early 21 Feb *[Jerusalem Radio]* 32
More Katyushas Hit Zone *[Jerusalem Radio]* 32
Earlier Report on End of Action *[Jerusalem TV]* 32
Clash With UNIFIL Detailed *[Jerusalem Radio]* 32
Two More UN Soldiers Injured *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 33
'Messages' to Lebanon Intended *[Jerusalem Radio]* 33
Leaders Comment Before End of Operation 34
Shamir on Goals of Action *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 34
Defense Minister Interviewed *[Tel Aviv TV]* 34

No Comment on Expansion of Zone *[Jerusalem Radio]* 36
Lubrani on Tension in North *[Jerusalem TV]* 36
Shamir Wins Likud Vote, Outlines 'Sacred Tasks' *[Jerusalem Radio]* 39
Notes Vote, Expansion of Zone *[Jerusalem Radio]* 39
Likud Leaders on Vote *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 21 Feb]* 39
Rabin Says No Need To Enlarge Security Zone *[Jerusalem Radio]* 40
Officers Dismissed After 14 Feb Attack *[Jerusalem Radio]* 40

JORDAN

Palestinian Delegates Speak Upon Arrival in Amman *[Amman Radio]* 41
Abu-Jabir Denounces Israeli Actions in Lebanon *[Amman Radio]* 41
Comments on Arab-Israeli Talks *[Beirut AL-DIYAR 9 Feb]* 42
U.S. Navy Impounds Ship Carrying Meat *[AL-RA'Y 21 Feb]* 45

LEBANON

'Severe Clashes' Continue Near Southern Villages 46
Israelis Fight Resistance Forces *[Tehran Radio]* 46
Amal in 'Violent Confrontation' *[RFL]* 46
UN Troops, Journalists Attacked *[VOL]* 46
Fighting in Villages Continues *[Beirut Radio]* 46
Helicopters 'Raking' Villages *[VOL]* 47
Lahd Militia Reportedly Enters Yatar *[Beirut Radio]* 47
Israeli Vehicles Reported Destroyed *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 47
Roads Closed; Reinforcements Reported *[RFL]* 47
Israelis 'Failed To Advance' *[Beirut Radio]* 48
'Retreat' Reported *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 48
Resistance 'Exterminating' Israelis *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 48
Three Israelis Said Killed *[Beirut Radio]* 48
Civilian Casualties Reported *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 48
Israelis Take Up SLA Positions *[VOL]* 49
UNIFIL Under 'Siege' *[Beirut Radio]* 49
Mordekhay: Israelis 'Had No Option' *[VOM]* 49
'Violent' Clashes 'Raging' *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 49
'Fierce Fighting' in Kafra *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 49
Israeli Reinforcements Reported *[VOL]* 49
Further on Israeli Casualties *[Beirut Radio]* 50
Hizballah Casualties Reported *[VOL]* 50
Hizballah Details Clashes *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 50
Resistance Invites Media Inspection *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 51
Israeli Use of Poison Gas Alleged *[Tehran Radio]* 51
Fighting Slackens; Israelis Reportedly Withdraw 51
Israelis Quit Yatar, Kafra *[RFL]* 51
Assume Positions in Hills *[Beirut Radio]* 51
Defense Minister Announces Withdrawal *[Beirut Radio]* 51
UNIFIL Confirms Israeli Withdrawal *[Beirut Radio]* 51
Amal Says Israeli Vehicles Withdraw *[VOM]* 52
'Guarded Calm' Prevails *[Beirut Radio]* 52
'State of Caution' in Region *[RFL]* 52
SLA Calls on Villagers To Return *[VOL]* 52
Army Tightens Security Around Camp *[RFL]* 52
Israeli Shelling, Overflights Resume *[VOM]* 52
Kafra, Yatar Under 'Heavy' Fire *[Beirut Radio]* 52
Movements Reported *[VOL]* 52
Resistance on 'Extreme Alert' *[Voice of the People]* 53
Hizballah 'Combing Operations' Completed *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 53
Hizballah: 'Let Us Fulfill Our Vow' *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 53
Nasrallah Declares Mobilization *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 53
Nasrallah: 'God Will Give You Victory' *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 53
'This Blow Will Cost Them Dearly' *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 54

'Time To Make Sacrifice' *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 55
Statement Issued *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 55
Birri Consults With Leaders, Departs for South *[Beirut Radio]* 55
Views 'Victory For All Lebanon' *[Beirut Radio]* 55
Amal Issues Statement *[Beirut Radio]* 55
Islamic Jihad Declares 'General Mobilization' *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 56
PLO 'Prepared To Take Part' 'If Asked' *[VOL]* 56
PFLP Announces Mobilization of Military Forces *[Beirut Radio]* 56
Officials To Inspect South; al-Hirawi Comments *[RFL]* 56
Karami on Situation, UN Security Council Response *[Beirut Radio]* 57
Backs Peace Process *[RFL]* 57
Buwayz Terms Israeli Moves 'Primarily Political' *[VOL]* 57
Al-Murr Chairs Meeting, Comments on Situation *[VOL]* 58
Cables UNIFIL Command *[VOL]* 58
Army Commander Addresses Troops in South 20 Feb *[Beirut Radio]* 58
Interior Minister Comments on al-Musawi Killing *[Voice of the People]* 58
Russian Ambassador Views Israeli Actions *[Beirut Radio]* 58
Delegation Leaves for Washington Negotiations *[RFL]* 58

SYRIA

Chief of Staff Back From Cairo Consultations *[Damascus Radio]* 59
Damascus 'Closely Watching' Lebanon Events *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 59
Newspaper: Shamir To Face 'Solid Arab Stand' *[SANA]* 59
Israeli Raids 'Fresh Blow to Peace Process' *[Damascus Radio]* 59
Newspapers Comment *[Damascus Radio]* 60

SOUTH ASIA

Bangladesh

Burmese Refugee Issue 'Of Great Concern' 62
Officials 'Alarmed' by Influx *[Dhaka Radio]* 62
EC Announces Emergency Aid *[Dhaka Radio]* 62

India

Article Sees U.S. Playing Nuclear 'Game' *[PATRIOT 9 Feb]* 62
Congress-I Party Sweeps Punjab Polls 63
'Large Scale' Rigging Claimed *[Delhi Radio]* 63
Congress-I Wins State Assembly Majority *[Delhi Radio]* 63
Congress-I Takes 12 of 13 Lok Sabha Seats *[Delhi Radio]* 63
Commentary Hails Election Outcome *[Delhi Radio]* 64
Militants Kill Four People in Punjab 20 Feb *[Delhi Radio]* 64

Iran

U.S., Israel Warned al-Musawi Death To Be Avenged *[Tehran TV]* 64
Memorial Service at Foreign Ministry *[Tehran Radio]* 65
Israel Said Seeking 'New Status Quo' in Lebanon *[Tehran Radio]* 65
Israel 'Escapes' Condemnation *[Tehran Radio]* 65
*Belgian Cyclotron May Have Nuclear Uses *[HET BELANG VAN LIMBURG 12 Feb]* 66
Velayati on 'New Strategic Balance' in Region *[Tehran Radio]* 68
President's Message Read at Afghan Shiite Assembly *[Tehran Radio]* 68

Nepal & Bhutan

Koirala Addresses National Day Rally 19 Feb *[AFP]* 68
Double-Digit Inflation 'Serious Problem' *[AFP]* 69

Former Panchayat Activists Form Political Party *[AFP]* 69
Mongolian Vice President, Delegation Arrive *[AFP]* 70
Delegation Departs; Visit 'Successful' *[AFP]* 70

Pakistan

Government To Seek World Support on Kashmir *[Islamabad Radio]* 70
Army Chief—No Compromise on Kashmir *[THE NEWS 21 Feb]* 70
Australia 'Disturbed' at Nuclear Declaration *[THE NEWS 21 Feb]* 71

Sri Lanka

15 Soldiers, 12 'Terrorists' Killed in Batticaloa *[Colombo Radio]* 71
Offensive Against LTTE Planned in Jaffna *[AFP]* 71
Colombo Recognizes 10 CIS Countries *[LANKAPUVATH]* 72
Government To Undertake New Economic Planning *[LANKAPUVATH]* 72
New Business Policy Improves Performance *[LANKAPUVATH]* 72
Foreign Firms Kept From Controlling Plantations *[AFP]* 73

Lebanon

Seven Hizballah fighters were killed and 17 others wounded in fighting with the IDF; three civilians were killed and nine others were injured, including a Lebanese soldier, Voice of Lebanon stated. Eight UN peacekeeping soldiers were wounded and 14 UN posts damaged, the clandestine Radio Free Lebanon (RFL) reported. Hizballah declared a "state of general mobilization," Voice of the Oppressed radio stated; Fatah's head in Lebanon said that the PLO is "prepared" to take part in the fighting "if asked to do so," and that the PLO will "place all its resources at the disposal of the resistance," Voice of Lebanon radio reported. Kafra and Yatar villages came under "heavy" Israeli artillery fire on 21 February, Beirut radio noted. President al-Hirawi said he hoped that Israel "will stop its escalation in the south under U.S. pressure," according to RFL; Prime Minister Karami reiterated that Lebanon is "committed" to the peace process on the condition that the resolution on Israel's withdrawal from the country is implemented, the radio continued. The Lebanese delegation left to attend the Washington peace talks, RFL reported.

Israel

The IDF units operating in Yatar and Kafra completed their tasks and returned to base, Jerusalem radio reported, adding "all of the objectives were met." Tel Aviv radio announced IDF casualties as two killed and three wounded. Katyusha rockets fired after the withdrawal, however, landed in the security zone, injuring no one and causing no damage, Jerusalem radio noted. Prime Minister Shamir won more than 46 percent of the Likud Central Committee vote, thereby retaining leadership of the party; David Levi won 31 percent and Ari'el Sharon won 22 percent, Jerusalem radio reported.

Syria

Damascus radio cited Hikmat al-Shihabi, Army and armed forces chief of staff, as warning Israel that the continuation of operations in Lebanon will "cause many complications, the repercussions of which Israel must bear." He continued: "It is only natural that we should help defend our brothers in Lebanon. It is our duty, and if Lebanon is attacked we will be there by its side," the radio added. Damascus is "closely watching" the "serious developments" in southern Lebanon, and these actions are "not acceptable," according to "informed circles in the Syrian capital," Paris Radio Monte Carlo reported.

Arab-Israeli Talks

According to Amman radio, chief Palestinian delegate 'Abd-al-Shafi observed that the Palestinians' "main topic" will be the period of time concerning self-government, and that "serious talks" would be held on this issue.

Inter-Arab Affairs

The Arab League General Secretariat called on the UN Security Council to adopt measures which will "deter the Israeli aggression" against southern Lebanon, MENA reported. The Arab League Council held an "emergency meeting" at the permanent delegates level to discuss Israel's settlement policies; a statement it issued condemned Israel for continuing settlements and called on the United States "not to respond to Israeli pressure" to obtain loan guarantees, MENA continued.

Palestinian Affairs

PFLP-GC leader Ahmad Jibril was the "architect" of the Lockerbie aircraft bombing, according to a PLO "intelligence file," MENA reported, citing the Tunisian magazine HAQA'IQ. This confirms that "Libya has no connection with the incident," the agency added. 'Arafat bemoaned

the fact that "there is no Arab coordination, not even a minimum level of coordination" on the peace talks, the London paper AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI stated. Bassam Abu-Sharif, adviser to 'Arafat, warned that if the United States grants loan guarantees to Israel this will be "an announcement that the United States is not serious about continuing the peace process," the London paper AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT said. "Halting all forms of settlement activities will be a principal issue" in the peace talks, declared Faruq Qaddumi, chief of the PLO Political Department, AL-RA'Y observed.

Libya

The Libyan judge in charge of investigating the Lockerbie bombing has threatened to halt his inquiry because the United States and Britain "refuse to cooperate" with him, London MBC television reported. The official also denied that Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi is "intervening" in the case, the television continued. Libya's embassy in Cairo began contacts last week with the leaders of "extremist Islamic groups" in Egypt to get them to move their activities to Libya, AL-SHIRA' reported. They will be provided sites in Libya to train "special squads" for "suicide operations against U.S. and British interests in the Arab homeland" if the United States launches a military strike against Libya, the paper concluded.

Iran

On behalf of Ayatollah Khamene'i, a memorial service was held for former Hizballah leader al-Musawi, at which a message from Hizballah was read which emphasized that "America and Israel must realize that the blood of the worthy martyr will be avenged on them," Tehran television reported. Iran has ordered a cyclotron which, with adaptions and in combination with other equipment, can enrich uranium for nuclear weapons, the Belgian publication HET BELANG VAN LIMBURG stated.

Saudi Arabia

"Prominent Saudi opposition figure" Tawfiq al-Shaykh, in an interview with the London newspaper AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI, discussed increasing pressure for reforms in the Kingdom.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League Holds Emergency Talks on Settlements

NC2002183292 Cairo MENA in English 1655 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Cairo, Feb 20 (MENA)—The Arab League Council held an emergency meeting this evening at the permanent delegates' level to discuss the continuation of Israeli settlement policies in the occupied territories and adopting a unified Arab stance towards the recent Israeli practices. Arab League Secretary General 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid received a request from the Palestine Liberation Organization to hold this emergency meeting of the Arab League Council and to adopt necessary measures to stop Israel setting up settlements in the occupied Arab territories threatening the Middle East peace process. [sentence as received]

Statement Issued

NC2002202092 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1910 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Cairo, 20 Feb (MENA)—The Arab League Council has condemned Israel for refusing to abide by Security Council resolutions and for persisting in implementing its settlement plans in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories; these acts constitute a flagrant aggression against the Palestinian people's rights and land. In a statement released after a two-hour meeting this evening, the Arab League Council called on the United States not to respond to Israeli pressure to obtain the loan guarantees that would help Israel establish settlements in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories.

The Arab League Council called on the international community, especially the permanent members of the Security Council, to apply the provisions of the UN Charter and international legitimacy's resolutions on promptly halting the construction of settlements and emigration to the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories. It also called for rapid dismantling of the Israeli settlements already built in the occupied Arab territories, abolishing the relevant Israeli measures, and stopping the construction of new settlements in the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem, in implementation of Security Council Resolution 465, passed in March 1980.

The Arab League Council has warned of the serious consequences resulting from the usurpation of the Palestinian and Arab territories and persistence in emptying them of their owners and settling Jewish immigrants in defiance of international will. It noted the gravity of settlements in Jerusalem and of the continued actions to change its Islamic and Arab features in violation of Security Council resolutions, particularly Resolution 252, passed in 1968.

The Arab League Council called for exerting serious efforts with those countries which allow waves of Jewish emigration in order to explain the grave consequences this emigration has for the Arab and Palestinian peoples and how it contributes to increasing tension and violence in the Middle East. It called on all countries to stop offering material support to Israel because this encourages its settlement plans, which obstruct implementation of the UN resolutions. The council decided to launch an Arab information campaign directed toward Western, particularly U.S., public opinion, to explain the dangers of the Israeli settlements to peace in the region and to world peace and security. It entrusted Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid with following up and implementing this resolution and submitting a report on the matter to the Arab League Council.

Statement on Israeli 'Aggression'

NC2002210392 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1939 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Cairo, 20 Feb (MENA)—The Arab League General Secretariat has called on the Security Council to take measures that will ensure putting an end to Israel's racist and expansionist policy and deter the Israeli aggression against southern Lebanon, and not to be content with appealing to the parties concerned to exercise self-restraint. In a statement released by Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid following an emergency meeting this evening, the Arab League General Secretariat asserted that Israel in fact is seeking to torpedo the concerted international efforts to establish peace and security in the Middle East. The statement also emphasized that Israel is seeking to compel the Arab countries to close the door to the negotiations which opened recently on reaching a comprehensive and fair settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict based on international legitimacy's requirements. The Arab countries complied with these requirements to emphasize their faith in peace as a principle and necessity.

The statement said that by its aggression against southern Lebanon, Israel is seeking to weaken international attempts to pressure it into implementing Security Council Resolution 425. It pointed out that the brave national Lebanese resistance derives legitimacy and existence from the continued Israeli aggression and occupation of southern Lebanon. The statement called for implementing Security Council Resolution 425, which provides for Israel's withdrawal from the Lebanese territories, so that the real reason for tension and fighting in the region will be removed.

The statement said that the fresh Israeli aggression against Lebanon and innocent civilians and the destruction it has caused confirm that Israel's aggression has no limits and that it still seeks again to harm the situation in Lebanon after it had begun to return to normal and the government had begun to take steps toward national accord in line with the al-Ta'if agreement. The statement pointed out that when all world peoples wish for peace and security in the Middle East, the treacherous Israeli aggression against Lebanon comes as a flagrant defiance

of all international charters and norms and reasserts that war and terrorism are an indivisible part of the structure of the Zionist settler entity

Palestinians Expect Better Ties With Saudis

JN2002145392 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 20 Feb 92 pp 24, 18

[By Tawfiq al-'Abid]

[Excerpt] Palestinian sources in Amman expect a relaxation in Saudi-Palestinian relations, which have been strained since the outbreak of the Gulf crisis.

The sources disclosed to AL-DUSTUR that Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat, is currently visiting Saudi Arabia. The sources said that Sha'th has met with senior Saudi officials in Jeddah, but gave no details of the meetings.

The sources added that Dr. Sha'th is carrying a message from Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat to King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz believed to be on developments in the Palestine question, the dangers of settlement activity in the occupied Palestinian territories, as well as the Palestinian position on the fourth round of bilateral negotiations scheduled for next Monday [24 February] in Washington. [passage omitted]

ICRC: Iran-Iraq Prisoner Exchange To Resume

AU2102091092 Paris AFP in English 0322 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] Geneva, Feb 21 (AFP) — Iran and Iraq have agreed to resume the exchange of their remaining prisoners of war by mid-March under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the ICRC said here Thursday [20 February].

A communique said a joint committee had met last week to resume the process of settling the fate of prisoners, touching on the question of those who disappeared or died in the Iran-Iraq war.

The committee was to meet again next month after the repatriation process had effectively resumed, the ICRC said, recalling that 78,000 prisoners had already been repatriated under its auspices since August 1990.

The exchange of prisoners and of information on those reported missing should be completed in a few months at the latest, a spokesman said.

Tehran says Baghdad is still holding 5,000 Iranian prisoners, while Baghdad says Iran still holds 30,000 Iraqi prisoners.

Islamic Affairs

JANA Interviews Islamic Bank Official

LD2002134392 Tripoli JANA in English 1647 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Arab Maghreb Union "pool" item]

[Text] Tripoli, Al Nawwar [February] 18, JANA—Fu'ad 'Abdallah al-'Umar the vice president of the Arab Islamic Bank praised the effective role played by the Great Jamahiriyah in the activities of the bank.

In an interview with JANA he said that the Great Jamahiriyah is considered to be among the first founding countries of the Islamic Development Bank as well as being one of the ones behind the idea of building a bank.

Mr. al-'Umar added that the Great Jamahiriyah is one of the five founding countries of the bank and consequently has permanent membership in the Council of Executive Managers.

The vice president highlighted the Great Jamahiriyah's continued financial support for the bank as well as its moral support whereby she participates in the process of decision taking which would have positive effects on the activities of the bank. The Great Jamahiriyah does this by supporting the banks activities in the Islamic countries by establishing many joint projects with the bank and using the available financial resources and the Islamic Development Banks resources.

Mr. al-'Umar went on to say that there is many opportunities for activity and fruitful cooperation between the Great Jamahiriyah and the Islamic Development Bank which he hoped would continue and progress.

He also asserted that the convening of the 16th annual meeting of the Governors Council of the Bank in the Great Jamahiriyah and attended by more than 44 finance ministers [sentence as received]. He said that with the existence of this great gathering and the widespread media interest accompanying it that it is without doubt that this will lead to further support and credence for the civilized manner which the Great Jamahiriyah dealt with the issues of the two airlines. Mr. al-'Umar expressed his pleasure [words indistinct] of this Islamic gathering in the Great Jamahiriyah which is considered to be one of the prime epitomes of civilization and industrial progress that which raises our spirits and that which obliges the heart of each Arab and heart of each Muslims. He also said that this annual meeting will discuss a number of main issues which concern the Islamic Development Bank.

The call to hold this meeting in Tripoli by the Great Jamahiriyah was spread to the finance ministers of the Islamic countries and the goal of this meeting is to discuss the activities of the bank particularly those of the last year and were a view of this activities will be

presented which will be an opportunity for the Governors of the Bank, meaning the finance ministers, to direct the Council of Executive Managers towards the important areas which need to be discussed and acted upon in future years. [sentence as received]

The last point is that at each yearly meeting which will be held in one of the Islamic countries the closing accounts will be put forward as well as a large number of projects which the bank is concerned with such as the fund of the portions for growth. During this meeting there will be fianance ministers present for the first time from the Islamic countries which were formally part of the Soviet Union and were invited to this meeting and we hope that their presence will result a number of positive programmes. Mr. al-'Umar added tha' the most prominent thing about this meeting is that it is being held in the Great Jamahiriyah and it is hoped that a number of important resolutions will be taken which will aim at transforming the bank to yet a higher and greater stage in Islamic development stressing yet again the urgency for this to be adopted at the meeting.

Mr. al-'Umar asserted that the participation of Islamic countries, as represented by their foreign ministers, as well as the presence of a number of observer delegations which are not members in the Islamic Development Bank, and the attendance of a number of large international finance bodies without doubt lends an international flavour to this meeting and allows the opportunity for discussion among these large financial institutions as to means for support which can be given to underdeveloped countries as well as countries which are in need of assistance. These institutions can also discuss those projects which are relevant to the future programmes of the bank.

Mr. al-'Umar also said that the programmes of the bank will also be based on many levels:

1. The bank programmes will be based on the needs of those countries which are less developed given that about 50 percent of the countries of the world which are most in need are Islamic countries. Therefore the bank will direct a large amount of its resources to help these countries and to revitalise them.

2. There will also be a stress on securing self sufficiency in food and to ensure this poor Islamic countries which will be brought about by giving financial support to food programmes in [word indistinct] country. The most important of this programmes would be agricultural projects, storing of crops and harvesting of crops or similar projects in order to ensure sufficiency in food for the Islamic countries. This is because it is believed that by securing food for the Islamic countries this will mean that other countries will not be able to apply economic restrictions on the Islamic countries given that a people which is self sufficient naturally is in no need of anyone else.

3. Even though the bank cannot be expected to provide everything for each country it can try to initiate projects which would link the various Islamic countries to one another as well as devoting all energies towards developing human resources in order to transfer technology, expertise and training as well as raising the level of abilities of the Islamic Countries.

Palestinian Affairs

PLO Says Jibril 'Architect' of Lockerbie Bombing

NC2002153792 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1330 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Tunis, 20 Feb (MENA)—In its 21 February issue the Tunisian magazine HAQA'IQ reports that the Palestinian intelligence file that Colonel al-Qadhdhafi studied during Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat's recent visit to Tripoli confirms that Ahmad Jibril, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] was the architect of the 1988 Lockerbie plane operation. Jibril is said to have received $10 million from Iranian intelligence to carry out this operation in retaliation for the U.S. Navy's blowing up of an Iranian Airbus in July 1988.

The magazine adds that Haj Hafiz Qasim, 47, on whom Jibril depends for delicate assignments, smuggled the explosives with the help of his aides in a vehicle he brought from Yugoslavia. The car was then transported to Frankfurt, where it was handed over to an explosives expert named Marwan Juraysat, a Palestinian with a Jordanian passport. Juraysat planted his bomb in a Toshiba Pumpbeat 453 radio and hid the radio in a suitcase so it would not be detected by the special devices used by airport security. The suitcase was shipped to Frankfurt aboard a Maltese Airlines flight and the bomb was not detected. In Frankfurt, the suitcase was put aboard the Pan Am flight heading for New York via London.

The magazine adds that Juraysat was previously arrested by German police in the Wiesbaden region but was released shortly thereafter. The magazine points out that before the Lockerbie incident, German police stormed the house where the operation was planned and found some weapons, 5 kg of Semtex—the substance used in the bomb that blew up the Pan Am airliner—and 3 kg of TNT. The magazine adds that Evan Sham'un [not further identified] had been aware of the movements of the group arrested by German police. After lengthy investigations some members of the group were released. Haj Hafiz Qasim and 'Adil Ghadfar remain in custody and will likely once again be the focus of attention.

The magazine adds that the Lockerbie case will mark a crucial turning point in international relations if the only objective of the accusations against Libya is to punish the real culprits. Otherwise, the Palestinian intelligence file will slip into oblivion.

It is worth noting that the Palestinian information on the Lockerbie incident is similar to information published

by THE WASHINGTON POST and the U.S.S. NEWS newspaper [as received] in November 1989, citing U.S. intelligence reports. It is presumed that 'Arafat adviser Bassam Abu-Sharif had made several unannounced visits to a number of Western capitals, including London and Paris, to inform authorities of the information gathered by the PLO on the Lockerbie issue. This information affirms that Libya has no connection with the incident.

'Arafat Says 'No Arab Coordination' in Talks

PM2002162492 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 18 Feb 92 p 5

["Text" of interview by PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat with the MIDEAST MIRROR BULLETIN by Fawwaz Najiyah; date and place not given]

[Text] [Najiyah] Are you satisfied with the course that the peace process is taking, and how do you rate its chances of success?

['Arafat] If you want the truth, we are not satisfied with it, and that is because of the constant Israeli maneuvers to gain time. A recent example is the escape through holding elections. This means that the present government is a temporary one and that its delegation is also a temporary one. In other words, until elections are held and a new government is formed, the negotiations will be mere talk and the current delegation will not be able to make any conclusive decisions.

The U.S. election campaign will reach its climax in July, which means that the Jewish lobby in the United States will be used to gain more time, and this will go on until after the U.S. election campaign. In other words, the negotiations—bilateral or otherwise—will not move on firm ground in accordance with President Bush's initiative based on the land-for-peace principle and on the implementation of Resolutions 242 and 338 and the fulfillment of the Palestinian people's legitimate political rights, which Israel is trying to avoid, before November. Israel says that it does not want peace in return for land and that it wants peace for peace. That is why it is using that land to fulfill its theory of expansion at the expense of Palestinian and Arab territory.

[Najiyah] What do you think would abort the peace process?

['Arafat] Israel's continued confiscation and absorption of land, the building of settlements, and the denial of the Palestinian people's legitimate political rights.

[Najiyah] Would the granting or withholding of U.S. loans [to Israel] influence your decision on the participation of a Palestinian delegation in the peace talks?

['Arafat] Such a decision would without doubt have major negative effects on the peace process, for granting such loans would mean two things. First, it would mean rewarding the Likud government for its procrastination policy, its iron-fist policy, its settlements-building policy, and its policy of repression and official organized terrorism against the Palestinian people.

Second, it would mean that there would be no land left about which to negotiate. So far 65 percent of Palestinian territory in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and Jerusalem has been confiscated under various pretexts, names, and methods.

[Najiyah] Are you satisfied with the level of Arab coordination in the negotiations?

['Arafat] I regret to tell you that there is no Arab coordination, not even a minimum level of coordination. For instance, the Arab foreign ministers have so far only met once to discuss the negotiations issue, and that was before the Madrid conference when a meeting was held by Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, and Palestine and was also attended by one representative from the Gulf states and another from the Maghreb states. No such meeting was repeated. There was an attempt at the recent Arab foreign ministers conference in Marrakech to discuss the issue of the multilateral conference—particularly b because the Arab foreign ministers conference was held before the Moscow conference and before the Security Council summit conference. Only the Security Council summit conference was discussed, however, because King Hassan represented the Arabs at that international conference. Let me point out that he was a fine representative of this nation. He was the only one to emphasize the Arab causes, particularly the Palestinian cause and the cause of holy Jerusalem.

[Najiyah] Have you welcomed or do you welcome [Saudi Foreign Minister] Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal's statement this week that there will be no regional cooperation before Israel withdraws from the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories and acknowledges the Palestinian people's right to self-determination?

['Arafat] We see this as a positive statement which dots the I's and crosses the T's because it means that there can be no progress in the multilateral negotiations at the expense of the bilateral negotiations. I thank Prince Sa'ud for that important statement which Israel and the states of the world should understand.

[Najiyah] According to some press reports, you still exchange messages with King Fahd. Is that true, and what are the obstacles still preventing a Saudi-Palestinian reconciliation?

['Arafat] Yes, that is correct. Correspondence has never stopped.

[Najiyah] So what is preventing a Saudi-Palestinian reconciliation?

['Arafat] The Gulf [states] position adopted in Kuwait recently. I have a right to say to my brothers in the Gulf states that what happened, happened, with all its negative and positive aspects. The Gulf crisis left serious

long-lasting effects on our Arab nation, but we must not remain captive to that. It is utterly unreasonable and incomprehensible to the Arab peoples and to the friends of our Arab nation for us to go to Moscow and sit down with Israel and then refuse to sit down with one another. I say this frankly and with brotherly love, divorced from any diplomacy. My position dictates that I speak frankly to our Palestinian and Arab masses.

[Najiyah] How do you view the Chinese and Indian decisions to establish diplomatic relations with Israel before any progress was made in the peace negotiations?

['Arafat] As you know, this is not a question of Israel or Israeli capabilities. Unfortunately, it is one of the conditions made by the United States, the only remaining superpower in the world after the collapse of the Soviet Union. It has conditions not only for the Arabs but also for the whole world, in support of its ally, Israel. Any regime or state—however big or small—that wishes to participate in the peace negotiations is faced with the U.S. condition that it should recognize Israel. The U.S. moves do not target only the states participating in the peace conference. There is continuing U.S. pressure on all states of the world, especially the Nonaligned states and the Third World states. It says: There will be no aid unless Israel is recognized.

What is now taking place in the world is a result of Arab weakness and the Arab collapse after the Gulf war. Far from being an Israeli victory, it is a part of the unlimited aid that Israel receives from the remaining sole superpower in the world.

[Najiyah] The former Soviet Union recognized the state of Palestine and appointed an ambassador to your state in Tunis. Does Russia now still adhere to that, and does Russia still have close relations with you, or has its attitude changed?

['Arafat] Yes, Russia is still committed. It has an ambassador here and there is a Palestinian ambassador in Russia. Before the Moscow talks the Russian leadership told us that the Soviet-Palestinian Committee must continue under the new name of Russian-Palestinian Committee and, as you may recall, the committee did meet indeed before the Moscow talks. The Palestinian side was headed by (PLO Executive Committee Member) Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas], and the Russian side was head by the Russian foreign minister.

[Najiyah] You are the first and, I believe, the only Arab leader to have visited one of the new Islamic republics in central Asia. What could these republics offer the Palestinian people, and what could you offer them in return?

['Arafat] We must be frank. These states need aid. Every part of the former Soviet Union needs aid. You can see planes carrying aid heading for Russia. All these states need aid. We ask: Can the Arab nation offer them aid or not? Because of the difficult conditions imposed on them, these states need our support, for otherwise others will fill the vacuum. That is why intensive contacts should be held in the context of a programmed Arab plan taking account of the economic, historical, and geographical aspects, because they are an integral part of the Middle East and Near East regions. Let us not forget that until not so long ago they were part of us and we were part of them. Historically, the Mamluks came from there. If we want to talk about their characteristics, we can say that Bukhara, Tashkent, and Samarkand produced Muslim ulema. That is the challenge facing us. Can we fill the vacuum or not?

As for Palestinian efforts, we are poor. All we have is knowledge and good minds. We have the highest level of education in the region. Self-improvement is the best achievement.

[Najiyah] How true are the reports about your mediation between Azerbaijan and Armenia?

['Arafat] They are true. I am doing that. I have sent a delegation to the two countries for that purpose. When I met with Azerbaijan's finance minister in Tripoli today I sent President Mutalibov another verbal message in connection with this. That is because the only losers in this dispute are the peoples of the two countries.

[Najiyah] Does Palestine have a position on the Turkish-Iranian-Arab race to win the affection of these republics?

['Arafat] Let us be frank about this. I do not wish to call it a race. It should be an integrated effort, for otherwise we would all be losers. The republics would lose and so would Turkey, the Arabs, the Iranians, the Pakistanis, the Indians, and the Chinese, who are their neighbors. We should view these matters in the right geopolitical perspective.

[Najiyah] Will the mounting Islamic tide be to the benefit or the detriment of the Palestinian cause?

['Arafat] It is in the interest of the Palestinian cause in the long run, but not in the short term, because of the upstaging practices in the Islamic arena and because some of these fundamentalist movements lack a general vision of life on our planet. This is being exploited to portray an untrue and inaccurate image of the Islamic movement. That is why the Islamic summit conference has great responsibilities. Resolutions should not be made without correct scientific grounds that take account of all these dimensions. History is merciless and will judge us severely for our mistakes, whether great or small. Ye are the best of peoples evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. [Koranic verse] In other words, the main feature of this nation is that it enjoins what is right and forbids what is wrong.

[Najiyah] Is the Iranian-Sudanese rapprochement a cause for concern?

['Arafat] For whom? For me? We have contacts with all these states and movements. Do not forget that Palestine is the heart of Arabism, Islam, and Christianity. It is the

common denominator for these three dimensions: Arabism, Islam, and Christianity.

[Najiyah] Does Palestine have a role to play in preventing bloodshed in Algeria?

['Arafat] Our role is modest, of course, but I want with all my heart Algeria to emerge from this whirlpool. We should be careful. It is very difficult to remain indifferent in the face of what is now happening in Algeria. We are all responsible.

[Najiyah] Who is behind the recent campaigns launched against you? Some of them were personal, and some were connected with the issue of Dr. Habash. The U.S. television network CCN has carried what it called a telephone conversation that took place between you and your representative in France. What connections exist between these campaigns, and what do you think is their aim?

['Arafat] These campaigns will not stop. They are part of the attempts to undermine the Palestinian leadership, and they have reached personal levels, but I want to say this for the record: Regardless of who is behind these campaigns, the Palestinian house is not made of glass. People who live in glass houses should not throw stones. We have so far been restrained and calm, with strong nerves. This is not the first campaign, and it will not be the last. Do you remember the campaigns after we left Beirut and after the so-called dissent? Do you remember what was said before the Palestinian reconciliation in Algeria? Do you remember the pre-Madrid period?

As you can see, all these campaigns foundered on the rock of the Palestinian revolution, the Palestinian people's steadfastness and resolve, and the strong links between the Palestinian revolution and resistance movement and our nation's good forces and the free people of the world. The CNN story, I regret to say, was fabricated. As I said in Geneva, this matter does not touch me; it touches French sovereignty. As you know, I have never made the mistake of attacking the Jews. As far as we are concerned, the Jews are our cousins. Even in our colloquial language we call them cousins. The Koran says: "Of the people of Moses there is a section who guide and do justice in the light of truth."

I am a Muslim and I am proud of it. I attack Zionism and see it as our enemy but not the Jews.

Do not forget that in the Palestinian movement we have Jewish strugglers of whom we are proud. We have friendly forces in Israel, such as the Peace Now Movement. On the other hand, in addition to the Zionist movement there are forces opposed to us in some European countries and in the United States. Their main preoccupation is to persecute the Palestinian people everywhere, and they use cheap methods—but they are Zionist forces. If you had not insisted, I would not have answered the question because I consider all this to be a part of the tendentious campaign against the Palestinian people and the Palestinian leadership. You know how we were raised and how I raise our people in Fatah. We were the first movement in the Arab world to call for a democratic state in which Jews, Muslims, and Christians could coexist. In those days such a call was considered criminal. Is that reasonable? Many nationalists and religious ideologists considered that idea (of coexistence) heresy. We were the ones who introduced that idea. I spoke about that in my 1974 speech to the United Nations, and I mentioned three strugglers: Shaykh Sabri 'Akramah, a Muslim (was a mosque preacher in prison); Ehud Radiv, a Jew and also a prisoner; and Archbishop Capucci.

[Najiyah] Keeping in mind that the Israeli elections are an internal affair and that what you say about this matter may be held against you, is it not true to say that the peace process' chances of success would increase if the Labor Party defeated the Likud in the elections?

['Arafat] My opinion and yours are not important. Regrettably, the Americans have embraced the Likud from the beginning. This is not demagoguery. Remember that Shim'on Peres formed his cabinet until the deception occurred, by one person from Shas. Why? Because the Israeli lobby in the United States is pro-Likud. Its main forces are pro-Likud, including some officials in the U.S. Administration.

[Najiyah] Would a Labor victory boost the peace process?

['Arafat] I do not wish to interfere in this matter because I do not want anyone to exploit what I may have to say. I know the minute details of Israeli society, ranging from the five princes of Likud and their ambitions to the conflicts within the Labor Party, to the middle-of-the-road parties and their chances of making gains at the expense of the two main parties, to the effects of the influx of Soviet Jews.

[Najiyah] Do the Arabs, or rather the Palestinians, of the 1948 territory play a part in the elections and in tipping the balance of power in the Knesset?

['Arafat] I believe they have a major role to play, but at the same time there are major forces which prevent them from drawing closer together. For instance, they were prevented from benefiting from the surplus votes. That would have given the Arab forces in the previous elections two more seats in the Knesset—at least two more seats. Two more seats in that composite body would have deprived Shamir of power.

[Najiyah] Would you like George Bush to be reelected president this year, and if so, what do you expect of him?

['Arafat] Again, I do not interfere. Do not force me to talk about something which is none of my business, for otherwise it would be seen as interference in U.S. internal affairs. What I wish for is the implementation of the land-for-peace Bush initiative and of Resolutions 338 and 242, meaning withdrawal from the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories including Jerusalem,

and the fulfillment of the Palestinian people's legitimate political rights and security for all.

Abu-Sharif Warns Against U.S. Loans to Israel

PM1902141692 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 14 Feb 92 p 8

[Interview with Bassam Abu-Sharif, adviser to PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat, by Huda al-Husayni; date and place not given]

[Excerpts] [Al-Husayni] It seems that the Israelis have found a solution to the settlement-building question and want to know from Washington whether it agrees to private settlement building. What position will you take?

[Abu-Sharif] The settlements set up on Palestinian and Arab territories are illegal and violate international law, international resolutions, and the Geneva Conventions. Above all, they violate and conflict with the official U.S. position.

This is because President Bush has repeatedly announced on the U.S. Administration's behalf that the United States considers the settlements set up on the territories occupied in 1967, including East Jerusalem, to be illegal. This is why we view this issue with great interest and believe that halting settlement building is the necessary start for the peace process' success. This is because without a halt to settlement-building preparations for removing the existing settlements [as published] when a political solution is reached is a fundamental condition for making the peace process a success. So we think that any loan, financial assistance, or any loan guarantees granted to Israel show that whoever grants the loans or guarantees is not serious about the peace process. On the contrary, this is encouraging Israel to continue its policy of expansion, seizing territory, and confiscating Arab land to settle hundreds of thousands of immigrants, which we regard as a prelude to further expansion in the Arab region.

[Al-Husayni] They have started occupying Arabs' homes.

[Abu-Sharif] I said in the past that in the Jerusalem area there was an Israel scheme endorsed by the Israeli Government—and about which I warned the world public—to confiscate all Arab homes in the Jerusalem area, which is not just Jerusalem city but now includes 23 percent of the West Bank's territory, according to the occupation authorities' decisions. This is why we see armed settlers attacking Arab homes to evict the families living there and to occupy them on orders from the Israeli defense minister and under the Israeli courts' rulings. So I say that every Palestinian must defend his home to the death and not allow any Israeli settler, armed or unarmed, to enter his home alive. It is the Palestinian's duty to defend himself, his family, and his home with all his strength, even with a kitchen knife. This is because that gross injustice and organized terrorist, expansionist policy cannot be confronted by screams or the media, but only by the death-defying defense of the Arab villages and homes, whatever the cost.

[Al-Husayni] But to confront arms you need arms. Knives are not enough.

[Abu-Sharif] Experience has proved that the situation requires a persistent and tireless struggle, regardless of the type of weapons used. Every Palestinian home must have stones inside in order to fight those who try to usurp it... and to let the world see what these racists are doing to the owners of homes and rights before the eyes of the entire world, including the powers sponsoring the peace conference. [passage omitted]

[Al-Husayni] The United States says that the guarantees are conditional, and Israel rejects the conditions on the basis that, if it does accept them it would in the future accept the land-for-peace principle, as Shamir said.

[Abu-Sharif] Very simply, the matter requires the implementation of the declared U.S. policy. Israel is not a superpower, and it has persisted in blackmailing the United States since the peace process started. We have facilitated, and continue to facilitate, that process. The time has come for us to tell the United States that enough is enough, for we have offered a great deal and will offer no more. We will consider the granting of loan guarantees to Israel—regardless of the conditions set by the U.S. Administration—to be an announcement that the United States is not serious about continuing the peace process.

[Al-Husayni] Inasmuch as the entire peace process will fail if the United States fails to halt settlement building....

[Abu-Sharif] The granting of guarantees to Israel would jeopardize the entire peace process. I can say that such an action would detonate many issues in the region and would cause unpredictable consequences.

[Al-Husayni] Let us not look at the region, but at you as Palestinians: Will you stop participating?

[Abu-Sharif] This matter is under consideration, and before 24 February the Palestinian decision will have been made in this connection. [passage omitted]

[Al-Husayni] But we can see that the PLO is playing just the guide's role in the negotiations which will decide the future. Will you be content with that role?

[Abu-Sharif] The guide's role and the decisionmaker, in fact. The PLO is the decisionmaker. That does not mean that I, as a [Palestine] National Council [PNC] member, am satisfied with the present composition of the PLO leadership. I believe that in order to tackle the stage ahead we must set up institutions capable of dealing with all developments in order to be able to confront Israeli intransigence, play a role in closing Arab ranks, and keep pace with world and Arab developments, and also to be able to absorb the requirements of the situation and to

respond to every new development so that we can keep pace with, or even ahead of, the peaceful solution train.

[Al-Husayni] You talk a lot about the speed of the peaceful solution train and say that after October it will be faster. Shamir said that he did not offer a commitment that a phased solution would be signed in November.

[Abu-Sharif] Shamir has offered no commitment to anything except that he will not relinquish the land. This is why what Shamir says does not interest me. The decision here is not Israel's. The decision here lies with the United States. We saw how U.S. President (Dwight) Eisenhower give Israel a 48-hour ultimatum to evacuate the Gaza Strip, and it did evacuate it in 1956. The defiance is a defiance of the United States. It is a defiance of President Bush. The Arabs no longer accept something said today and forgotten tomorrow. All the Arabs participating in the peace—and all Arabs are participating in it—no longer accept words without deeds. I reiterate here that what is required as soon as possible, and before the Paris conference in April, is an Arab meeting—not for reconciliation, as some believe, but for coordination between Arab parties participating in a multilateral conference, and which will discuss the region's future. This is because how can the Arabs go to such a conference without a unified plan, without a unified view, and without a unified position based on common interests? I do not want here to talk about pan-Arabism, Arab brotherhood, and.... Set all these things aside. What is needed is a unified position based on common interests among the Arab peoples and states in the face of Israeli intransigence. This is because if we do not do that, Israel will single out every Arab side and the new superpowers that have entered the ring—like Japan, Canada, and Germany—to steal their money and leave the Arabs as they are, without money and without any benefit from whatever happens in the region. [passage omitted]

[Al-Husayni] Why does the Palestinian leadership not apologize for its position on Kuwait's occupation and the war?

[Abu-Sharif] That is a thorny subject, I know. This is not to defend the Palestinian leadership, of which I have many criticisms to make. At the PNC meeting a group of brothers and I spoke and tried to change the composition of the leadership, to inject new blood and young faces that could absorb new developments and boost the Palestinian movement. But democracy produced another outcome. [passage omitted]

[Al-Husayni] Let us return to the Palestinian issue. It was reported that [PLO Executive Committee member] Mahmud 'Abbas (Abu-Mazin) is "upset" because you did not participate in the Moscow summit. Is that true? Should you have participated?

[Abu-Sharif] In the Palestinian leadership opinions are adopted democratically and views are raised at leadership meetings. Views often conflict, sometimes are in complete agreemment, and at other times are adopted after a majority vote, sometimes overwhelmingly. As for Moscow, it is true that there was a tough debate among the Palestinian leadership because this is a sensitive and complex topic. This is because the early agreement was that in the second stage of a settlement the Palestinians would participate with a delegation comprised of members from inside and outside [the occupied territories]. There was overwhelming Palestinian popular support for the decision to follow that line. Brother Abu-Mazin held the view, as did others, that it was necessary to participate, even with a delegation from inside only. But the Palestinian leadership believed that there it was necessary for the Palestinians to go to Moscow, but attendance or nonattendance at meetings would depend on the implementation or nonimplementation of previous promises with regard to the participation of a Palestinian delegation comprising Palestinians from inside and outside.

[Al-Husayni] Who made these promises?

[Abu-Sharif] They came in the first U.S. assurances, namely, that in the next stage the Palestinians would participate with a delegation comprised of Palestinians from inside and outside the occupied territories. I say that it is no secret that a discussion took place with the U.S. side about what the next stage is. Is it multilateral [negotiations]? Of course—and let us be frank—there is some ambiguity in the documents. This means that the Palestinian side can interpret this as the second stage as long as it deals with final issues that concern the region as a whole. At the same time the other side can say: No, the second stage is the bilateral negotiations, which concern the occupied territories, the final status of the occupied territories alone. But the balance we have come out with is a good one, and I can also say that contacts between President 'Arafat, the European parties, and the U.S. Administration through a third party have been constant during this period. The balance that we have reached is acceptable, and the Palestinians will participate in the conference to be held in Paris soon with Palestinian delegations comprising Palestinians from inside and outside the occupied territories.

[Al-Husayni] Will you participate in two committees only?

[Abu-Sharif] Probably more. The matter is left open, and Jerusalem has been included on the agenda of the talks. [passage omitted]

[Al-Husayni] Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa expressed his belief that Syria is willing to sign a peace agreement and to establish diplomatic relations with Israel in return for the Golan!

[Abu-Sharif] I believe that that point was made clearly by the Syrian delegation in Washington—that is, land for peace; that is, the Golan in return for signing a peace agreement with Israel.

This was clearly stated by the Syrian delegation during the talks between the Syrian and Israeli delegations—that is, Syria is willing to sign a peace agreement in return for recovering the Golan.

[Al-Husayni] What is your position?

[Abu-Sharif] We are willing to sign a peace agreement in return for the return of all the Palestinian 1967 territories, including East Jerusalem. Anyway, all bilateral talks are held in a parallel manner between each Arab side and the Israeli side. But Resolution 242 stipulates an end to the occupation of the territories that Israel occupied in 1967. So we will achieve this in parallel, as several parties.

As for the bilateral negotiations, this matter is coordinated among the Arab parties concerned. We are coordinating with our brothers in Syria, a support for the Palestinians. We Arab sides agree for progress in bilateral negotiations to be made on an equal footing among all parties.

[Al-Husayni] The occupation might be removed from Gaza and the Golan but the West Bank remains.

[Abu-Sharif] We will continue to insist on an end to the Israeli occupation of all the Arab territories: the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Golan, and southern Lebanon. Then if Israel begins to withdraw from the Arab territories, it means that it has started to implement Resolution 242, which is what we want. And Israel would not then be able to stop that implementation at a certain point.

Qaddumi Emphasizes Need To Halt Settlements

JN2002111692 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic
20 Feb 92 p 26

[Report by 'Awdah 'Awdah]

[Text] Faruq Qaddumi, chief of the PLO Political Department, has said that halting all forms of settlement activities will be a principal issue on the agenda for the fourth round [as published] of the Washington talks. He added: We will not move beyond this issue without having a decision on it, with U.S. guarantees.

In an exclusive statement to AL-RA'Y upon his arrival in Amman last night from Damascus, Qaddumi said: Any compromise agreement between Israel and the United States to grant Israel loans for settlements, regardless of the name under which these loans are given, constitutes a U.S. recognition of the legitimacy of settlements. He emphasized that such a position contradicts the UN Security Council resolution which calls for halting settlement activities and removing all settlements.

He added: We are not asking for the impossible. We demand that the peace process should continue to move toward a successful end and achieve security and stability in the region.

He said that by choosing early elections Israel has closed the road to peace and the peace process. It has put in place many obstacles to stop the peace vehicle from moving even one inch forward.

He added that Israel's unjust aggression against southern Lebanon aims to provoke the Arabs and make them withdraw from the settlement process. He emphasized that the peace conference has been approved by the world as the means to settle the Middle East conflict as part of the comprehensive international march to preserve international security and stability and to build a new world.

Qaddumi asserted that the current peace process is a compulsory route for the Palestinians, one which they must follow to protect themselves first, to win the support of the world's peoples and states, and to isolate Israel completely until it reaches a state of despair because of its upcoming isolation and lack of positive response to the international will and the world community, which strives and endeavors to achieve a just and lasting peace in the new world.

The chief of the PLO Political Department said: We do not agree to what Israel claims to be plans for self-rule. One can say that there is a one-year transitional period, or even for a period less than that, under the supervision of the United Nations or troops that are deployed based on a decision by the United Nations.

He added: This is what we emphasize and demand. This means drafting arrangements and a timetable for withdrawal, one which can be supervised by the United Nations and which should start at the first phase of the bilateral talks.

He said: The official Israeli statements, which include arrogant, insolent threats against Lebanon, Syria, and the Palestinians, show that Israel holds in contempt international public opinion and the world community. They also show that it does not respond to the calls for peace and the constructive initiatives to strengthen the foundations of security and peace.

He emphasized that the peace process is more likely to fail than to succeed. He added: However, we do not like to keep saying this because we do not want to be accused of not being serious about the peace process. We have already made many concessions to ensure that the peace conference is convened and to push forward the settlement process.

Concluding his statements to AL-RA'Y, Qaddumi said that the continuity of the intifadah is a basic and inevitable factor. The intifadah cannot cool down unless the occupation is completely removed, he added. Qaddumi pointed out that the struggle for peace will continue hand in hand with the national struggle and the attempts to strengthen Arab solidarity and joint Arab action to consolidate the siege on Israel and to persuade the other states not to offer any form of backing and to impose sanctions against it through the United Nations.

U.S. Attitude Toward Israeli 'Violence' Scored

LD1902212192 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Station commentary]

[Text] Brothers: The call by the United States to Israel and the Palestinian people to exercise self-restraint and reject violence gives rise to laughter and bitterness. The reason for the bitterness here is that the U.S. Administration is striving to show itself as a neutral party which rejects all military actions against Israel and also rejects semimilitary actions carried out by the Palestinian strugglers in self-defense.

This equation is astonishing—between the Palestinian people who have been under occupation for more than half a century now, and the Israeli terrorist gangs whose bullets daily kill at least one Palestinian martyr and whose savagery is unprecedented in history. Perhaps this world which is unaware—genuinely or deliberately—of the operation of annihilation and expulsion being practiced by the Israeli occupation authorities against our Palestinian and Lebanese peoples, still remembers live scenes when a group of criminal officers of the Shamir army beat a number of Palestinian youths with sticks, clubs, and iron bars. They broke their arms, legs, and backs. This happened at a (?secret) location because the officers did not want an international scandal in case the inhumane and dirty operation became known. But despite attempts to conceal the fact and deceive public opinion, in which the Zionists excel, the fact was revealed by a group of international journalists and cameramen who were able to smuggle out these shameful pictures to be seen by the entire international public opinion. The incident then became an unprecedented human scandal and an example of what the tyrannical Zionist forces, without batting an eyelid, can do in such a disgusting and shameful manner to flout elementary ethics and international law.

When the U.S. Administration places the ugly and bloody Israeli violence on an equal footing with what some of the sons of the Palestinian people do as a result of their deep feeling of bitterness and humiliation, it knows that it is deceiving itself more than deceiving the Palestinian and Lebanese people. Had the United States expressed the minimum concern for reducing Israeli violence, it should have immediately gone to the UN Security Council to come out with a strong resolution providing international protection for the Palestinian people and stopping the shedding of Palestinian blood, which is still flowing in rivers as a result of the Israeli savagery. We ask whether the United States and its legal apparatus are deliberately trying to obstruct all attempts to impose protection for this helpless people, or just trying to deceive this people.

Editorial Urges 'Immediate' U.S. Settlement Action

TA2002165092 Jerusalem AL-SHA'B in Arabic 20 Feb 92 pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "Escalation of Evasion!"]

[Text] The escalation of tension in south Lebanon as a result of continued Israeli shelling of this region's villages falls within the framework of Israel's systematic policy of placing obstacles in the way of the peace process. It is doing so by imposing new realities in the region that would force the Arab sides participating in the peace process to pull out of this process so that ultimately Israel will avoid paying its overdue debts.

Each time that Israel has felt in distress and cornered, it has sought to defuse its domestic crisis by fabricating external crises. This practice is liable to place the entire region today on the verge of a new peril whose destructive results are only known to God. Such a development would open the region's doors to the winds of tension and despair, and this calls for immediate U.S. and international action to stop Israeli actions against the peace process.

While hoping that the U.S. Administration will be able to shoulder its responsibilities toward the peace process in general and toward providing immunity for our negotiating delegation, we still entertain many doubts about the credibility of U.S. moves. Moreover, we still believe that the U.S. moves in the region will be doomed to utter failure unless the U.S. Administration quickly compels Israel to halt its escalation in south Lebanon and forces it to abandon the logic of force and its settlement policies. Finally, the U.S. Administration should induce Israel to respond to the resolutions of international legitimacy that call for implementing the principle of "land for peace."

Conditions in Territories 'Worse Than Ever'

TA1902062892 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in English 17 Feb 92 p 4

[Editorial: "Situation Getting Worse"]

[Text] The situation in the occupied territories is not very hopeful, either politically or economically.

Politically, Israel's policy of non-stop, fast-paced settlement construction is threatening Palestinian existence in the small area left in which they can live. In spite of an international outcry and world opposition, Israel proceeds with construction of settlements because it knows that the more Jews it plants in the occupied territories, the harder it will be to remove them. This means a new status quo favorable to Israel and new facts on the ground requiring tremendous effort to change.

With the construction of settlements, settler vigilantism is on the rise and actually has government encouragement. Top government officials are talking about "civil guards" to patrol the occupied territories, or bands

composed of settlers. With the new army regulations, which allow soldiers and civilians to shoot at Palestinians only suspected of intending to attack, we can expect the trigger-happy settlers to use this freedom to terrorize the unarmed Palestinian population.

The political process is affected by the harsh reality of life in the occupied territories where residents watch the settlements mushrooming all over the West Bank and Gaza. Palestinians are not very hopeful that an honorable peace settlement can be reached. They watch a stubborn Israel getting everything it wants and a world community unable or unwilling to do anything about its illegal occupation of Arab territories and its subjugation of an entire nation. While Israel proceeds with human rights violations and defiance of international decisions, the world community sits by, failing to address Israel's intransigence. Instead, they turn against the underdogs, even looking for things to make the Palestinians look bad.

Economically, living conditions for Palestinians in the occupied territories are worse than ever. Today, nearly every institution is the scene of a wage strike or strong protests from employees who are constantly complaining of deteriorating living standards. The average income of Palestinians is incompatible with the cost of living. The cost of living index rises constantly, but real income gradually drops. While in the past Palestinians used to be able to travel to the Gulf states to make a living and send money home, today this opportunity has vanished. Palestinians in the occupied areas are left with no income other than what they can make from working at home.

The picture for tomorrow is not very bright and this brings despair. There is a little aid coming from here and there, including from the European Community, but it is hardly enough to affect the general population. Israel wants 10 billion dollars to house its new immigrants, but the Palestinians get only a few million and are expected to use that to build the infrastructure of a state. In such obvious inequity there is little gratitude.

DFLP Issues Statement Marking 23d Anniversary

LD2002220792 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] calls for the stepping up of the Palestinian struggle and for the unification of the Arab stand in the confrontation against Israeli challenges and the Israeli aggression against our people and their national rights.

The DFLP released a statement in Tunis today on the eve of its 23d anniversary on Friday in which it says that the Israeli occupation seeks by all means of terrorism, repression, deportations, and the expansion of settlements and the seizure of land to decide the fate of the negotiations and to impose its will. This is because the struggle of our people, the continuing intifadah, and the inflexibility of the PLO stand are certainly guaranteed to hamper its criminal plots.

The DFLP affirms that the battle against the advancing settlements is the peak of our mass and political struggle. It is the gateway from which there is no retreat in the talks process. One must not be distracted by any measures or actions which divert us from this immediate objective, or be tricked by promises of economic support made under the pretext of raising living standards, for such promises were raised at the Moscow conference. These promises have no purpose except to shatter the unity of the people, to divert them from the path of their struggle to regain their national rights, and to liquidate the uprising.

Safeguarding our soil against the danger of settlements is our guarantee for safeguarding our right to self-determination, independence, and return.

The DFLP calls for the coordination and unification of the Arab stand, and it makes any progress conditional on halting settlements, the acceptance of the complete withdrawal from Palestinian and Arab soil, and self-determination for the Palestinian people. It also calls for the formation of the broadest Arab and international solidarity front in which the forces of peace in Israel would take part against the danger of the settlements, and for confrontation against U.S. maneuvers which are currently aimed, on the eve of Israeli elections, at legitimizing and materially bolstering the settlements.

Algeria

Boudiaf Calls for Stability, Economic Growth

LD2002214292 Paris Antenne-2 Television Network in French 1900 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Interview with Higher State Council Chairman Mohamed Boudiaf by special correspondent Pascal Guimier in Algiers on 20 February—recorded]

[Text] [Boudiaf] I am a man who will not tolerate any physical or moral harm to those who have been arrested. What I can say is that all these persons have been arrested legally and that because of this there should be no physical or moral harm done to them. I personally pledge not to tolerate any violations of this kind. If there are any violations whatsoever the perpetrators will be punished. I hope that once things return to normal this state of emergency will not last and that most of these people will be released.

[Guimier] Mr. President, you are a new man appearing on the Algerian political stage, but you are also inheriting structures and men belonging to the past. Will this not hamper you?

[Boudiaf] This may be so, but what we must remember is that the idea of change, of fundamental change, is a fact and that I will do everything in my power to make this happen quickly. It is not easy. With the advent of the new government new faces will appear and we will go along this path and rectify things. Things like this cannot happen from one day to the next. One cannot wave a magic wand to solve Algeria's problems.

[Guimier] Mr. President, you have not been elected and you have not been chosen by the Algerian people. What is your claim to legitimacy?

[Boudiaf] I was called when Algeria was going through a very critical period. I thought that my presence could be useful to pull Algeria out of this situation. It is true that this legitimacy could be described as a historical legitimacy. This does not interest me. What I would like personally is for this state of emergency not to last and for us to really move into an era of democracy, an era of debate which will provide legitimacy to me as well as to anyone else who is a candidate for the presidency or for this higher post of state responsibility. I think that an initial step toward a solution could be found in a patriotic gathering—as all other criteria have disappeared—as the only thing capable of facing up to all the problems of Algeria in all their dimensions and to make sure that these people who are expecting so much are also players in this process.

[Guimier] So you are a president who stands above the parties.

[Boudiaf] Yes, yes, I stand above the parties. I would like these parties to develop their actions outside the authority. This authority has its objectives, which are: restoring authority, restoring the state's authority, a return to public order and peace; and to permit Algerians to not be afraid to express themselves or to discuss their problems. Of course, there are many things that Algeria is waiting for. This will not be achieved in one or two days, but I think that the important thing is to make a good start and to look at things with great realism and to say to the people: This is what we are capable of doing and this what we are not capable of doing! I think that the Algerian people need this frankness.

[Guimier] According to you the solution for Algeria would consist of a mixed economy which would have, side by side, a strong public sector and a dynamic private sector.

[Boudiaf] Yes, that is so. We are committed to a liberal system and to a market economy. Algeria will be a country open to foreign investors within the framework of cooperation and partnership. We can continue with a private sector which should be maintained because it is a strategic one, and a private sector [as heard], which should be encouraged. The state does not control the economy; it is a regulating element rather than an authoritative one.

[Guimier] According to you this is how the daily life of Algerians will be improved.

[Boudiaf] I think so, because we have great potential. The private sector, which has been discouraged so far, can attract investment. We also think of our emigrants in France who can also contribute. We have been contacted by people who might invest in Algeria and who are very ready to do so.

[Guimier] If the situation remains calm tomorrow, Friday, will you consider this a victory?

[Boudiaf] Any victory will be Algeria's victory. I personally would like Algeria to settle down and for the fear, the obsessive fear of every Friday, to come to an end. This will be a big victory for everyone because every recent Friday has brought with it many uncertainties. I think that we must calm the situation. I am confident that this Friday, like all future Fridays, will be calm, because the authorities are shouldering their responsibilities. This will not be aimed against the Islamic Salvation Front or anyone else, but we would not like violence to take a firm hold on a society which is still experiencing all kinds of sufferings. Violence will not solve Algeria's problems.

FIS—14,000 Arrested; Detainees Tortured

NC2002183892 Paris AFP in English 1800 GMT 20 Feb 92

[By Eric Wishart]

[Text] Algiers, Feb 20 (AFP)—The security forces arrested 14,000 people in the space of a week after

clashes between the police and Muslim fundamentalists and tortured detainees, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) said Thursday.

The arrests took place between February 6 and 13, according to the local Algiers bulletin of the FIS, MINBAR EL-DJOUMOUA, which cited sources "very close to the security forces."

The government has said 5,000 have been arrested since February 7. More than 50 people were killed and 200 wounded in clashes which erupted after Friday prayers that weekend.

The FIS quoted witnesses as saying that the security forces spared nobody in the arrests, taking even the mentally ill, children and the elderly to police stations, and subjecting them to beatings and insults.

"On their arrest, many people are beaten up by the police, particularly in the police stations," it said. Detainees were crammed into tiny cells and beaten with pistol-butts and typewriters.

They have their faces "covered with rags soaked in dirty water, choking them and making them sick," the FIS said.

It said prisoners were made to lie face down when they were being transported in trucks to conceal them from onlookers.

The government has opened four detention centres in the Sahara Desert of southern Algeria to hold those rounded up during its crackdown on the FIS, most of whose leaders are in jail.

The FIS said that the only food in the cells was hard bread, a bowl of milk shared between two prisoners, and thin noodle soup.

Police systematically registered, photographed and interrogated the detainees, trying to find out which mosque they attended and whether they were members of the FIS.

Those rounded up and taken to the government's "processing" centres included "university students, journalists, old men, children, the unemployed, traders, mayors and deputy mayors, and even FIS deputies elected in the first round of the legislative elections", held on December 26, the FIS said.

Officials Close Blida University After Protests

LD2002185192 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1800 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] There is a certain agitation at the universities in the country. Blida University has been closed by its administration. No official reason has been given for this decision. For the last two weeks the university has been the scene of continuous agitation by students claiming membership in the University Movement for the Protection of the People's Choice.

Al-Nahdah Party Paper Confiscated

LD2002163192 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] The last issue of AL-NAHDAH has been seized. The last issue of AL-NAHDAH, the organ of the Al-Nahdah party of Cheikh Abdallah Djaballah, was seized the day before yesterday. This has been announced by the management of the paper.

In a communique sent to APS today the paper's editorial, in addressing readers, expresses its hope that freedom of opinion and speech will not be harmed.

Attackers Assault Police; Search Under Way

LD2002113592 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2300 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] It has been learned from the gendarmerie command that a Mazda 323 automobile belonging to the gendarmerie post in (Oued Djar) with four gendarmes on board was attacked yesterday evening. The same source said that the search for the aggressor group is still continuing but gave no further explanations.

6 Billion Franc French Loan Available in March

LD2002231292 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] It was learned this evening from a banking source in Paris that outlines of the loan estimated at around 6 billion francs and which the French Government agreed to grant to our country in accordance with an agreement concluded in September, will be made available at the beginning of March.

The same source confirmed that a meeting took place in the French capital between the most important French banks and the Algerian Bank for Rural Development and the Algerian Development Bank in order to discuss the agreements on implementing these loans. With the exception of some details which remain to be settled, there is no serious disagreement in signing these agreements and making their effects available to Algerian organizations at the beginning of March.

Egypt

Mubarak Receives Syrian Chief of Staff in Cairo

NC2002094792 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0728 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Cairo, 20 Feb (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak received Syrian Chief of Staff General Hikmat al-Shihabi at the Presidential Palace this morning.

The meeting was attended by Lieutenant General Salah Halabi, Armed Forces chief of staff; and Dr. 'Isa Darwish, Syrian ambassador in Cairo.

Syria 'Ready' To Help Lebanon

NC2002095192 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0820 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Excerpts] Cairo, 20 Feb (MENA)—The Syrian chief of staff, General Hikmat al-Shihabi, described a meeting today with President Mubarak as a positive opportunity.

In a statement afterwards he said that the Syrian people and leadership have a special love and respect for President Mubarak. [passage omitted]

Asked about the Damascus Declaration and Syrian-Egyptian-Gulf cooperation, the general said that the declaration was clear and frank, adding: We and our Egyptian brothers have backed it and we still hope that it will be implemented.

On security in the region one year after the Gulf war, the Syrian chief of staff said that this would depend on our brothers in the Gulf. "We are ready, along with our Egyptian brothers, to provide all the help asked of us."

Al-Baz Meets U.S. Envoy, Condemns Israel

NC2002132292 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1220 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Cairo, 20 Feb (MENA)—Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry undersecretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, made exclusive statements to MENA affirming that Egypt condemns the Israeli aggression on southern Lebanon, and declares such practices to be a stumbling block for the peace process, which must be established on the principle of land for peace and Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

Dr. al-Baz said he believes that Israeli officials' words destroy the credibility of the peace process. There is a dire need to stop these practices and statements, which cast doubts on the usefulness of the peace process.

He went on: The United States agrees that the settlement issue is considered one of the biggest obstacles to peace in the Middle East.

This morning, Dr. al-Baz met U.S. Ambassador Robert Pelletreau in Cairo. They discussed developments in the Middle East; the dangerous situation in Lebanon; and the next round of negotiations on the peace process, due to be held in Washington.

Editorials, Commentaries on Lebanon Situation

AL-AKHBAR Assails U.S. Role

NC1902071492 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0616 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] Cairo, 19 Feb (MENA)—In its editorial today, AL-AKHBAR says that the U.S. call on all parties to exercise self-restraint following the aggression against southern Lebanon and the assassination of Hizballah leader 'Abbas al-Musawi has become a steady slogan that Washington uses every time Israel exercises its unique right to attack countries, and violate international law governing countries' behavior and relations. AL-AKHBAR says that by using this clause the United States blames both sides and equates the aggressor and the victim.

AL-AKHBAR says that it was believed that the effort that U.S. President George Bush's administration exerted to prepare the atmosphere for settling the Middle East problems and establishing peace would at least bar Israel from carrying on its usual attacks during the negotiations with the Arab delegations, or that Washington would pressure Israel not to mar the atmosphere of the talks, but nothing of the sort has happened.

Warns Shamir on 'Playing With Fire'

NC2002100492 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0435 GMT 20 Feb 92

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "Shamir Is Preparing for War, Not Peace," AL-AKHBAR says: While the international community is talking about preparations for the resumption of the bilateral talks that stem from the Madrid peace conference, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir has comes out with a strange statement, asking the Israeli Army to prepare for war and confront resistance against Israel's occupation.

The paper goes on: Shamir is playing a new tune in public today, in another provocative attempt to put an end to any talk about peace. Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Arab League secretary general, warned that further Israeli provocations at this stage can be expected in a bid to exploit Arab reaction.

It seems that Shamir's government is currently seeking to step up aggression against Lebanon to set the stage for a repeat of the Lebanese invasion scenario of 1982, to impose full Israeli control on that Arab country, putting an end to the legitimate authority that has succeeded in firmly planting its roots and spreading its sovereignty over a large part of its national territory, with the help of nationalist elements. We warn Shamir and his followers, however, of the repercussions of playing with fire, particularly now.

Sees 'Hidden Goals'

NC2002230092 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2139 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Cairo, 20 Feb (MENA)—AL-AKHBAR newspaper has warned that Israel is preparing for new wide-scale terrorist operations against Lebanese territory, in a bid to achieve the hidden goals of its blatant invasion of southern Lebanon in the first half of 1982. In its Friday editorial, AL-AKHBAR stated that Israel has found in the killing of three Israeli soldiers by the Lebanese resistance the opportunity to make another attempt to complete its failed invasion of Lebanon of a few years

ago, during which it committed the ugliest crimes of annihilation and devastation.

AL-AKHBAR says that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir wants to exploit the U.S. elections, which will occupy a major part of U.S. President George Bush's time, at the same time as the one-upmanship expected during the Israeli elections in June, in order to implement a major part of his scheme to establish Greater Israel.

Concluding its editorial, AL-AKHBAR says that the Arab world must be alert and vigilant in order to foil these plans at any price and by any means. The Arab League must act vigorously to bolster Arab solidarity, and support Lebanon should it be exposed to a new Israeli adventure.

AL-AHRAM Views 'Sudden Explosion'

NC2002071892 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0435 GMT 20 Feb 92

[From the press review]

[Text] In an editorial entitled "Explosive Events," AL-AHRAM refers today to the sudden explosion of the situation along Israeli-Lebanese border after a period of relative calm that lasted quite a while. This explosion has resounding international echoes, evidenced by calls from France, the UK, and the United States for self-control, out of fear of renewed violence, tension, and isolation in the region.

The paper continues: There is much to be said in this regard. The Lebanese front seemed the least likely to explode after the Lebanese Government came such a long way to establish internal control and national reconciliation, paving the way to meet Israel peacefully through negotiations and try to end the occupation by implementing UN Security Council Resolution 425. In fact, it was expected that an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanese territory was one of the most likely Arab issues to be solved quickly.

AL-AHRAM concludes its editorial saying that the timing of these events, which coincides with the third round of Arab-Israeli bilateral talks in Washington on 24 February, is worth some attention since it is an attempt to raise the stakes. The understanding, of course, is that operations will not expand to the point where they might thwart the negotiations themselves.

'Greater' Deterrent Required

NC2102070492 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0435 GMT 21 Feb 92

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "The Omens of War," AL-AHRAM writes in its editorial: The events in Lebanon and Israel have regrettably imposed themselves on the region and thrown their long shadows on the peace talks in Washington. They are now getting in the way of the march to achieve the hoped-for historic reconciliation based on realizing rights, easing control and occupation, and implementing international legitimacy's resolutions.

The paper points out that events are escalating into clashes between the armies because they were not handled properly from the beginning. It is as if the situation exploding was premeditated.

The paper adds: The world fears events will become grave, especially since these provocative acts have mobilized the Lebanese Government to send its Army firm orders to confront, and to protect land and honor.

The paper concludes that the situation requires a deterrent much greater than the Security Council, specifically, unfortunately [words indistinct] and asks all parties to practice extreme self control.

Commentary on 'Resorting to Jungle Law'

NC2002123992 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Commentary by Ibrahim Wahbi: "Israel Is Providing Justification for the Resumption of Violence."]

[Text] It appears that through brutal acts against Lebanon and the occupied territories, Israel will bring back the massacres, wars, terrorism, and other operations that began in 1947. It is assassinating influential Lebanese figures, imposing settlements on occupied Arab territories after displacing their residents, arming Jewish immigrants, and mobilizing them into militias to terrorize Arab citizens. It believes that by doing this it can ruin the peace talks, which it does not like or want. Actually, Israel is reminding everyone of the killing of UN envoy Count Bernadotte in order to ruin the partition plan he supported as a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Assassinating the leader of Lebanon's Hizballah in an air raid has provoked violent artillery clashes between the Lebanese Shiite Hizballah forces—backed by the Lebanese Army—and the Israeli occupation forces in south Lebanon. Antoine Lahd's pro-Israeli agent forces are again making threats. Lebanese forces are responding, and the war in Lebanon is erupting again.

Perhaps Tel Aviv wanted this to happen, believing this is the only way to divert attention, particularly U.S. attention, from the occupied territories, the settlements, and the peace talks. It sought to avoid the increasing insistence of the world community, and especially the United States, that the building of settlements in the Arab territories should stop. U.S. State Department spokesperson Margaret Tutwiler voiced Washington's worry over the spread of violence in the Middle East, and the United States urged all concerned parties to exercise the greatest possible self-restraint.

As we have already said, Israel believes the Arab world is preoccupied with problems in Algeria, Libya, Somalia,

Sudan, and Iraq, and all it needs to do now is divert the world community's attention from the peace talks.

Israel is diverting attention from the negotiations and is trying to ruin them by provoking crises the venue of the talks; the U.S. housing loan guarantees; the selection of the Palestinian delegation; and finally by inventing a cabinet crisis, toppling the government, and holding new elections. All this is done while waiting for the U.S. presidential election—the campaign for which has already begun—to be held on 3 November 1992.

If Israel is resorting to jungle law, it must understand that it is not the strongest in the jungle. Its actions are giving a strong impetus to the Palestinian intifadah and providing it with all possible justification. It is also encouraging the return of terrorism, which had almost disappeared.

Muslim Brotherhood Condemns al-Musawi Killing

LD2002102992 Tehran IRNA in English 0834 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Athens, Feb 20, IRNA—Leader of Ikhwan al-Muslimun (Muslim Brotherhood) in Egypt, Muhammad Hamid Abu-al-Nasr, has strongly denounced the brutal killing of Hizballah leader Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Abbas al-Musawi by the Zionists and called for jihad (holy war) to liberate occupied Palestine. "The Muslim Brotherhood condemn the repeated Zionist aggression and its killing and expulsion of defenseless citizens, women and children and offers its sincere condolences to the Lebanese people for the loss of the great combatant Shaykh 'Abbas al-Musawi, may Allah bless him," a statement received by IRNA from Cairo Wednesday said.

Hojjat ol-Eslam al-Musawi, 39, his wife, his six-year-old son and bodyguards were killed in southern Lebanon Sunday in an Israeli helicopter raid against their motorcade. Pointing to recent statements of the head of the Zionist state, Yitzhaq Shamir, that he will not give up an inch of Palestinian land, the statement said any peace treaty with Israel was of no avail. "All this confirms that achievement of any peace or signing of any agreement with the enemy is useless," the statement in Arabic said. The Ikhwan leader said the only way for recovering the occupied lands was for Muslims to turn towards Allah and adopt jihad as the means.

'Muslim Militants' Reportedly Clash With Police

NC1702184392 Paris AFP in English 1710 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Excerpt] Cairo, Feb 17 (AFP) - About 10 Muslim militants were injured in a clash with police after the militants tried to close a store renting "immoral" videocassettes in a poor Cairo neighborhood, sources close to the militants said Monday.

A U.S. State Department official meanwhile has held talks with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and other officials about U.S. allegations of torture against Muslim extremists and other government opponents, U.S. officials said.

The militants sought Saturday to close the store in the Imbabah neighborhood because they considered the Arab, Indian and Western videos rented there immoral, the sources and eyewitnesses said.

No details were available on the extent of their injuries, although sources said they had been beaten by police clubs. Nor was it clear how many militants might have been arrested.

The police have had a strong presence in the Imbabah neighborhood since last September when clashes occurred between Christian Copts and Muslims who had burned two churches.

But a resident said the clashes on Saturday were not those of inter-religious rivalry.

Richard Shifter, undersecretary for human rights at the U.S. State Department, has held talks with Egyptian officials since the weekend about torture allegations.

He was following up on an annual U.S. State Department report alleging human rights violations in Egypt, particularly torture, U.S. and humanitarian sources said. [passage omitted]

Columnist Sees 'Nuclear Embargo' on Islamic World

NC1502153292 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 11 Feb 92 p 8

["Close-Up" column by Salamah Ahmad Salamah: "We and the Nuclear Sale"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] If we were to examine closely the clamor that is currently being raised over the nuclear weapons market—and the fears raised by the West about the danger of Soviet nuclear weapons, quantities of nuclear fuel, or advanced nuclear technology leaking out through Soviet nuclear experts offering themselves for sale—we would find that it is a fabrication designed only to prevent Arab and Islamic states from approaching this field or entering it in any way.

This simply means that there is effectively a nuclear embargo on the Arab and Islamic world, under the pretext that Islamic states—of which the West only likes to specifically mention Libya, Algeria, Iran, and Iraq—will start a nuclear war that will lead to the destruction of the world, should Soviet weapons and scientists fall into their hands. There is, however, a big difference between possessing weapons of mass destruction and being able to use them.

Although Iraq possesses chemical weapons, the Gulf war proved that was no reason to use them.

Israel is exempt from all the measures and restrictions of this strict nuclear embargo. Soviet scientists arrived in

Israel long ago and there is no doubt that Israel got into the nuclear sale and benefited from its low prices before any other state.

What does the West want? Why should the Arab and Islamic world submit to these restrictions? The balance of nuclear terror protected the world against a third world war. Without a nuclear balance in the Middle East, Israel will not abandon its superiority and will not agree to make the Middle East an area free of weapons of mass destruction.

Mubarak Sends Letter to Qatari Amir on Relations

NC1502161892 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak has sent a letter to Qatari Amir Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani. Dr. Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub, Egyptian awqaf minister handed the letter to Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, Qatari deputy amir and heir apparent, who received him today. The letter deals with coordination, unification of stands, and strengthening cooperative relations.

Romanian State Secretary Visits, Meets Officials

Meets Musa, al-Baz

NC1602201392 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa received Ionel Sandulescu, Romanian state secretary at the Foreign Ministry, tonight. The two officials discussed bilateral relations and ways of bolstering them.

Sandulescu said that the meeting was fruitful and worthwhile, adding that international developments and the situation in the Gulf were discussed.

The Romanian official noted that Egypt and Romania are to sign an agreement on cooperation and friendship. It will be formulated as soon as possible, and will hopefully be signed next summer.

[Cairo MENA in English at 1905 GMT on 16 February reports that Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first undersecretary, also met the Romanian minister today. "Al-Baz said the meeting covered means of promoting cooperation between Egypt and Romania in various fields, particularly the economic and cultural ones."]

Views Exchanged

AU1702190092 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1712 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES, 17/2/1992—Now in Cairo, as part of a visit to a number of countries of the Arab peninsula, Ionel V. Sandulescu, secretary of state at the Romanian Foreign Ministry, was successively received by Usamah al-Baz, first deputy foreign minister and chairman for political problems, Ismat al-Megid, secretary-general of the Arab League, and 'Amr Musa, Egyptian foreign minister.

The wish was expressed of developing the ties between Romania and the Arab countries. The present stage of the Romanian-Egyptian links was examined and the idea was expressed that the signing of a treaty of friendship and partnership would create a legal framework for the development of these relations on various planes. It was established that draft treaties be exchanged and further negotiations start for the drawing up of a mutually acceptable text.

Mr. Ionel V. Sandulescu renewed an invitation addressed by Romania's Foreign Minister to his Egyptian counterpart and secretary of the Arab League, to pay an official visit to Romania. Egypt's minister of foreign affairs was glad to accept the invitation.

Views were also exchanged on the international life, on Middle East developments and the peace negotiations. As was established, the two countries will have consultations whenever necessary.

Delegation Departs

NC1702220192 Cairo MENA in English 1715 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] Cairo, Feb. 17 (MENA)—The Romanian minister of state for foreign affairs and his accompanying delegation left here this afternoon after a two-day visit to Egypt, during which he met with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid.

The Romanian minister stated that his talks in Egypt pertained to the issues of mutual interest and the preparations of an agreement on friendship and cooperation to be signed during the coming summer.

This visit falls within the framework of his tour which includes Yemen, Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates.

Musa, Romanian Justice Official Discuss Cooperation

NC2102064092 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1540 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Cairo, 20 Feb (MENA)—Interior Minister Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa today conferred with Romanian Interior Minister Victor Babiuc [title as received] and his delegation, who are in Egypt for a conference of international arbitration boards. During the meeting, the two ministers reviewed cooperation between their countries' police and security organs, consolidating this cooperation, and exchanging antinarcotics expertise. Minister Musa stressed that the Egyptian Interior Ministry's policy is to promote and consolidate cooperation with foreign police agencies and international crimefighting organizations in general, and with antinarcotics departments in particular.

Diplomatic Relations With Moldova Planned

NC1302155892 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 13 Feb 92

[Text] The Arab Republic of Egypt and the Republic of Moldova today decided to establish diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level. Ahmad Mahir, Egyptian ambassador in Moscow, and the first deputy prime minister of Moldova will sign the statement. The statement affirms the desire of the two governments to develop their diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level, effective the date of the signing of this statement.

Libya

Judge Threatens To Halt Lockerbie Investigation

NC2002182592 London MBC Television in Arabic 1812 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] The Libyan judge in charge of investigating the Lockerbie issue has threatened to halt his investigations because the United States and Britain refuse to cooperate with him. Judge Ahmad al-Tahir al-Zawawi expressed dismay at the allegations that his country is trying to avoid any judicial measures and attempting to conclude a different sort of deal with the West. Al-Zawawi denied that Colonel al-Qadhdhafi is intervening in the trial [as heard], adding that any suspicions harbored on this point is an insult to him as a judge. He noted that he has been working in this field for 32 years.

'Suicide Operations' Planned With Egyptian Groups

NC1802091392 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 10 Feb 92 p 41

[Text] Libya's embassy in Cairo began contacts last week with the leaders of extremist Islamic groups in Egypt, especially members of the military wing in the al-Jihad Organization, to get them to move their activities to Libya. Sites will be provided for them in Libya to train special squads Libya has started to form in the past few weeks to carry out suicide operations against U.S. and British interests in the Arab homeland if Libya comes under U.S. military attack in retaliation for the crash of the U.S. plane over Lockerbie in 1988, which claimed the lives of 280 Americans and Britons.

AL-SHIRA' has learned that Libya has offered large sums of money to the al-Jihad Organization, whose leadership agreed to move to Libya following discussions between Libyan officials and Egyptian leaders [as published] to make available all facilities for the free movement of the organization's members between Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco and to allow them to form joint regiments that will include Libyans, Egyptians, Sudanese, Jordanians, and Yemenis.

The Egyptian leadership expressed strong objection to the whole idea and presented a very strongly worded rebuke to Ahmad Qadhdhaf al-Dam [official at the Libyan liaison bureau in Cairo] on the meetings between Libyan political figures and leaders of the al-Jihad Organization.

Al-Bishari on Lockerbie, Palestinians, Peace

NC1402152092 Beirut AL-DIYAR in Arabic 8 Feb 92 p 5

[Interview with Ibrahim al-Bishari, secretary of external liaison and international relations, by correspondent Thurayya 'Asi in Larnaca, Cyprus, during the Nonaligned Movement's foreign ministers meeting; date not given]

[Text] ['Asi] What are the latest developments in the Lockerbie and UTA issues, specifically, your stand on Resolution 731?

[Al-Bishari] From the start of the crisis, we have voiced the opinion that if the matter is a legal one, then it should be dealt with through the law and that if there is disagreement, then we are willing to go to the International Court of Justice to decide on this conflict between our laws and those of these countries. But if the question is a political one, then it should be resolved through negotiations so as to reach a political solution in accordance with the UN Charter.

The United States and Britain said at the beginning that this is a legal matter and should not be politicized. Then they politicized it and went to the Security Council. We are convinced that individual and legal issues do not fall within the jurisdiction of the Security Council because they do not threaten international security and peace. Libya did not commit aggression against these countries. It did not send its planes to attack them and does not have the capability to send its naval forces to commit aggression against them, particularly as these countries are far from us (from Libya) and there are continents and seas between us.

Yet these countries insisted on politicizing the matter and issued Resolution 731. We in Libya consider this resolution to be unfair and unjust because it is designed to blackmail Libya and infringe upon its sovereignty. We believe that this resolution is only the prelude to other resolutions. They want to use it as the basis for other resolutions to impose economic sanctions and they might take cover from the Security Council to carry out military action against Libya.

Still, we believe that since the UN secretary general is involved in this resolution, we can hold dialogue with him and exchange with him proposals for a solution so that in the end we can find a way out that is satisfactory for us and for the parties to the conflict, and which does not conflict with our country's sovereignty and is in line with the UN Charter and the principles of international law.

As of this hour (when the interview was held), an envoy of the UN secretary general has come to us and we have told him we will respond effectively and positively to the legal aspects of the resolution. The secretary general also

summoned the Libyan UN envoy and gave him a message which we are studying in depth in order to give practical responses to the secretary general.

['Asi] Does the message you have received include a specific solution?

[Al-Bishari] No. The message includes proposals on how to implement the resolution. We will study the ideal way of dealing with this resolution.

['Asi] It has been reported that Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid proposed during his contacts with UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Ghali the establishment of an Arab League-UN committee to mediate. What is your position on this proposal?

[Al-Bishari] We agree with this proposal.

['Asi] Is it a Libyan proposal, particularly in light of Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid's visit to Libya and his meeting with Colonel al-Qadhdhafi two days before the proposal was made public?

[Al-Bishari] I said we agree with the proposal to form a neutral international committee to investigate the matter. It is a positive idea. The committee can be formed either by the UN secretary general or by the Arab League and the United Nations. We believe this committee can start its work freely and we trust its objectivity.

The proposal is not a Libyan demand. I can even say that it took shape during the dialogue between us, the Arab League secretary general, and the Arab brothers. Contacts with the Arab brothers have not stopped throughout the crisis. In any case, we back Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid's proposal.

In this issue, we are completely open because we are confident that our country and even our citizens are innocent. Therefore, we are open for unlimited cooperation as long as this does not conflict with or infringe upon the Libyan state's sovereignty.

['Asi] What do you mean by Libyan sovereignty? Does it mean not handing over the two defendants to the foreign judiciary?

[Al-Bishari] The sovereignty of the Libyan state means respect for two basic issues: First, that others should treat Libya within the context of the UN Charter, recognized international charters, and the principles of international law; and second, the supremacy of internal Libyan laws must be respected.

When Libya received the British and U.S. indictments, it assigned judges from the supreme court to pursue the issue. The judges asked their colleagues in the United Kingdom and the United States to cooperate on this issue, but no response has been received. The issue now rests in the hands of the judges. There is not one official Libyan department that dares intervene in the judiciary affairs or to violate current Libyan laws. The court or the judge is entitled to imprison any official who dares encroach on such laws.

Laws in Libya, as in the rest of the world, are sacred. The situation in Libya is not exceptional. It is not something new when we say that Libyan sovereignty must be respected. This is not invented by Libya. All countries recognize such rights. Modern Libya was established in 1951 and it did not exist before this date. There are countries which are well-known for their laws. I believe that Britain, the United States, and even France are well aware of the substance of the principle of sovereignty because they are ancient countries with respectable laws.

['Asi] You said that Resolution 731 might lead to imposing economic sanctions or even a military strike against Libya to implement the UN resolutions, with the Iraqi and Kuwaiti experiment still recent. How are you preparing to face the consequences for failing to implement the aforementioned resolution if such sanctions are imposed on you?

[Al-Bishari] I expect that if these countries manage to go once again to the Security Council and force it to adopt a resolution for an economic boycott, they will not hesitate to use the United Nations as a cover for implementing an aggressive and oppressive program.

But I would like to clarify an important issue. The case here is different from that of Iraq and Kuwait. Libya has not attacked another country, nor has it threatened world security and peace.

['Asi] What about the attacks carried out by Libyan citizens? Are these not a threat against world security and peace?

[Al-Bishari] The Libyan state cannot be responsible for what Libyan citizens do. Also, the state of Libya cannot be held responsible for any charges leveled against any Libyan citizen. This citizen could be either an opponent of or against the regime. There is opposition inside and outside the country. Therefore, we cannot link the charges against a Libyan citizen to the Libyan state.

We only say that there are current Libyan laws and there are recognized international norms. We cannot create a precedence by violating the principles of international law or by encroaching on our internal laws. Thus, the dispute over jurisdictions started. We therefore proposed to go to the International Court of Justice or to an international team of legal advisers to be formed by the United Nations, although the issue remains one of charges and no verdict has been issued. It is only mere suspicion.

But if harsh measures are adopted against us by these countries, whether directly or through the Security Council, these measures will have grave consequences on the Arab region. The first result of these measures would be the failure of the Middle East peace plan, because the Arab nation will not accept that while efforts are being

made to resolve a problem, others are trying at the same time to slaughter another Arab people.

The Arab nation has suffered much because of the Gulf war, and therefore it simply will not accept that Libya be punished. This is because the Arab nation is convinced that Libya is innocent and that there are attempts to make it a scapegoat. If we are attacked, we will certainly resist it. This is a legitimate right endorsed by the United Nations. We are a small country and our capabilities are limited. We will defend ourselves and our country, although we do not want to have to do this.

['Asi] Colonel al-Qadhdhafi has proposed a formula for a settlement: these countries should provide the evidence and documents proving the two Libyan citizens guilty, and he would then hand them over. How true is that?

[Al-Bishari] Let them show us this evidence. Let the world see it first. Then there can be a fair, neutral, and international investigation. Afterward, we can deduce the results we deem fit and which we believe are logical and legal.

['Asi] What if the accusations are confirmed?

[Al-Bishari] If the accusations against these two citizens prove true, we definitely will not be merciful with them.

['Asi] Will you punish them, or will you hand them over to a foreign judicial system, British perhaps?

[Al-Bishari] Such talk is premature. But I assure you that we will not have any mercy on them. Libya opposes terrorism. It supports the safety of civilian flights. It supports the Montreal agreement. If the accusations are true, Libyan laws in this regard are very strict. I remember when we tried a Japanese who hijacked a plane in Banghazi airport and destroyed it in 1971. He was sentenced for the two crimes of hijacking, or piracy, and attacking civilians and their property. Therefore, the two sentences were to cut his hand and leg off and imprison him for life.

Libyan laws are very strict, no less strict than British or American ones.

['Asi] Some observers note that the objective behind raising the Lockerbie and UTA issues—at this stage in particular, after five years since the incident—is to bring Libya to heel, especially after striking Iraq and launching the peace process to organize the situation in the Middle East. What is your opinion?

[Al-Bishari] Certainly, the timing is politically intended to make Libya change its stands toward the Palestine question and other causes of concern to the Arabs, including Arab unity, and to occupy it with things other than expressing its opinion on current events in the Arab region.

We know this. Therefore, I assert that we will not abandon our principles, and we will protect what we believe is right and just in our political stand.

['Asi] Observers also have noticed that after this campaign began, Libya made concessions, some of which have been to close down the PLO offices, especially those considered terrorist by the West, and also national liberation movements.

[Al-Bishari] One must distinguish between national liberation movements, such as the Palestinian people's movement, and terrorist movements.

We have supported, and continue to support, national liberation movements—an issue sanctioned by the UN Charter. But we strongly oppose any movement that attempts to carry out irresponsible acts. We deal specifically with the Palestinians in this manner. Proceeding from this stand, we have had dealings with the legitimate Palestinian leadership represented by the PLO leadership. Today, Libya has only a Palestinian embassy; therefore, we deal with them and support them through these channels.

['Asi] But you always have dealt with the PLO leadership and other Palestinian factions outside the PLO. Why have you decided now to confine your dealings with the Palestinians to the PLO leadership?

[Al-Bishari] Because the PLO leadership is the only party chosen by the Palestinian people to represent them. We cannot disregard the Palestinian people's choices. Moreover, we are not dealing with names, but with symbols of the Palestinian people.

['Asi] I actually am questioning the timing. Why have you previously dealt with all the factions, including Abu-Nidal [Sabri al-Banna]?

[Al-Bishari] We have not dealt with Abu-Nidal, and he is not in Libya. We have never had any relations with his organization.

['Asi] And the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command [PFLP-GC]?

[Al-Bishari] The PFLP-GC is not a terrorist organization.

['Asi] Why did you close down its offices when it was accused of being a terrorist organization?

[Al-Bishari] Whether the West accuses it of being a terrorist organization or not is not our concern. We do not believe it is. We believe it is an organization fighting for the liberation of Palestine. We support those Palestinians who wish to liberate their country and whose struggle is directed toward the inside of the occupied territories. We do not support any Palestinian who carries out operations outside the Palestinian territories. We support the Palestinian people's struggle to liberate the occupied Palestinian territories. We have no connections at all with, and are not responsible for, any operations Palestinians carry out. We support the intifadah inside the occupied territories and believe that the Palestinian people's struggle is a just one.

['Asi] Does this mean that the Libyan leadership has developed a progressive concept to be in line with the international changes?

[Al-Bishari] In politics nothing is solid. Principles can be firm, but political positions change. This is particularly true since the world has changed much in the past months, and we cannot but take these changes into consideration because we are part of the international community, part of this world, and we are no exception.

['Asi] Does the fact that you are taking international changes into account signal a retreat from backing the Palestinians, particularly since Libya always has backed the Palestinian cause, and hence came your support for all the Palestinian factions?

[Al-Bishari] No. I said we are with the Palestinian people and are backing their just and legitimate struggle to attain their rights of return and self-determination.

['Ali] What are you offering them?

[Al-Bishari] We are supporting the intifadah regularly, providing aid to schools and hospitals, and giving assistance to the Palestinians abroad, such as medicine, food...

['Asi, interrupting] Italy and France also offer humanitarian assistance.

[Al-Bishari] When the Palestinians opted for armed struggle, we built up the PLO's military capabilities. If the Palestinians today are changing their course, we will do what they ask us to do to help them. As for the issue of Arab unity, it is sacred to us and we are still struggling to affirm it. Our appeals and efforts in the past 23 years were not for nothing. Proof of this is the Arab Maghreb Union, which is swiftly developing toward a confederation, as well as the integration between Egypt and Libya. Another example is the Gulf Cooperation Council, and the day will come when these countries will merge and unite.

['Asi] They will unite; the great Maghreb, the Gulf-....How in your view will the ongoing events in Algeria affect the course of the Arab Maghreb Union?

[Al-Bishari] What is taking place in Algeria is an Algerian internal affair that concerns the Algerian people alone, and no one has the right to poke his nose into the affairs of Algeria or of other Arab countries.

['Asi] My question was specific. Will the changes taking place in Algeria affect the course of the Arab Maghreb Union's march?

[Al-Bishari] I have not heard from any Algerian official, whether in the opposition, in the previous government, or the current government, any criticism of the Arab Maghreb Union. We, the peoples and countries of the Arab Maghreb, decided, by our own will, to establish this union, and it is an irrevocable choice. It will go forward, not stop. At the end of the year, we will remove the customs barriers, and by the year 2000 there will be a common Maghreb market. Internal events in any country do not affect our course.

['Asi] Let us return to the question of the campaign against Libya. The UTA issue is different from that of Lockerbie. Do you believe it is possible to resolve the crisis with France before resolving the crisis with Britain and the United States, or are the two issues parallel?

[Al-Bishari] We are making diplomatic contacts with France and trying to find a solution. They demand judicial cooperation, and we have agreed that the French magistrate and Libyan judge appointed by the supreme court cooperate. We have asked the French magistrate to visit Libya, and the Libyan judge himself even proposed to go to France. Two of those whose names were mentioned in the UTA issue expressed their readiness to travel to France and stand before any French court. I, too, suggested that Libya and France establish an agreement for the extradition of criminals and for effective judicial cooperation. We hope internal French conditions will make this cooperation possible. We are trying to resolve this crisis, and it is in France's interest to resolve the problems between us, for France is a party to the Western Mediterranean bloc and has interests in the Arab Maghreb and in Libya. Any tension between Libya and France will reflect negatively on its relations with the Arab Maghreb. France also has a presence in Africa, and Libya has deep ties with the African states. This means that there are things in common and common interests between us. Consequently, it is in everyone's interest to find a solution satisfactory to us and to them.

[Asi] The campaign against Libya coincided with the start of the Middle East peace process. Libya was not invited either to Madrid or to Moscow. What is your stand on the current peace process?

[Al-Bishari] We support the confrontation states.

['Asi] You mean the front-line states?

[Al-Bishari] If you like. By these states I mean Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and the Palestinians in their effort to find a peaceful solution for retrieving their occupied territories. This support was decided by the Arab League at one of its ministerial meetings in Cairo. In Libya, we say that these countries are better qualified to understand the nature of the problem. We did not go to Moscow because we have no crisis of water, environment, pollution, or, or... with the Israelis.

['Asi] Armament?

[Al-Bishari] The issue of disarmament does not in fact fall within the framework of such negotiations. Its framework is the United Nations. The latter has a disarmament program that we support. I said so at the general assembly. I also declared our support for any proposal to eliminate weapons of mass destruction. I believe that talks are under way to eliminate chemical weapons by the end of the year. We will join this if the Middle East,

European, or Arab Maghreb countries decide to do so. When the whole world decides on disarmament, we will be the first to do so.

['Asi] There were differences of views between the Arab countries on participation in the multilateral talks in Moscow. What is Libya's stand on this?

[Al-Bishari] In this, we support and back the Syrian stand.

['Asi] Does not the presence of some Maghreb countries in Moscow, such as Tunisia and Morocco, affect the course of the union you are establishing?

[Al-Bishari] We are five independent countries which express five political wills. We work for all that is positive in our identical stands and leave aside the negative ones. The Arab Maghreb's foreign ministers meet regularly to coordinate stands. There were no disagreements between us. We might differ on some views, but this does not reach the extent of estrangement. Every country has the right to practice its policy in the way it sees fit. The important thing is that we understand each other's positions. For example, Tunisia went to Moscow and has its own view. We might disagree with it, but at the same time we respect it.

I want to address my final words to Lebanon. Lebanon is dear to us. We appreciate its people's cleverness and energy. It has had enough crises in the past years and these should come to an end. I also believe that all the Arabs should support the national reconciliation process, try not to interfere in Lebanon's internal affairs, and admit that Lebanon is an independent sovereign country. We all must respect its sovereignty. In fact, the Arabs' interference brought the Lebanese to their former state of fighting. Today we must aid Lebanon's reconstruction and stability and also help restore life there to normal.

['Asi] The establishment of an international fund for Lebanon's reconstruction has been frozen. What do you propose to reactivate it?

[Al-Bishari] I propose to the Arabs that they should establish an Arab fund for helping the reconstruction process in Lebanon. We will be the first to contribute to this fund if it is established. I reiterate that the Lebanese people deserve to live now in peace and prosperity.

Oil Output Cut by 10 Percent in Line With Pact

LD2002180292 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1720 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] [No dateline as received] The brother secretary of the People's Committee for Petroleum has told JANA that in accordance with the agreement reached during OPEC meetings held last week in Geneva, which provides for effecting a reduction in the oil production of the organization's member-states with a view to stabilizing the oil market, the Jamahiriyah has decided to put this agreement into effect and to commit itself to producing only the share allocated to it. Accordingly, present levels of the Jamahiriyah's production of oil will be cut by 10 percent.

Arab Media Delegate on Lockerbie 'Smear Campaign'

LD1802205492 Tripoli JANA in English 1716 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Tripoli, an-Nawar [February] 18, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—At the 49th session of the permanent committee for Arab media which is currently taking place in Cairo exposed the futility of the Western media campaign which is being aimed at the Great Jamahiriyah. [sentence, including location, as received]

In a memorandum circulated in the morning session of the meeting today the delegation spoke of how the Western media conducted a smear campaign during the last 3 months concentrated on the Great Jamahiriyah which based its claims on circumstantial details and fabricated reports which were presented as facts. This media sources also used allegations, analyses, and assumptions with the hope of blackening Libya's reputation in relation to the regrettable accident in which a Pan Am airliner was destroyed over Lockerbie in Scotland in 1988 and holding Libya responsible, by means of widespread media reports without basis, without proof, with no reason and most important with no legal basis.

The delegation from the Great Jamahiriyah asserted that this deliberate distorting was spread, broadcast, published, and made known to the people by means of the prominent Western news agencies and it is they who fabricated this news, propagated it, tailored it and was prepared to be broadcast internationally according to the way which would be in accordance into the liking of the neo-colonialist onslaught in the Arab nation in the wake of the Gulf war and the fall [of] the Soviet Union.

The delegation also said that regrettably this distortion of Libya's image is a daily event which is being absorbed by the Arab and Islamic media. In all the Western news agencies including REUTERS, ASSOCIATED PRESS, UNITED PRESS, FRANCE PRESS are explaining the news and are including fabricated assumptions which distort the truth and are exporting and selling to the Arabs at the highest prices while the Arab news agencies are distributed their news for free.

The representative for the Great Jamahiriyah in the permanent committee for Arab media highlighted the aggressive role played by the four Western news agencies which send more than 24 million words a day and are the source of about 19 groups of news items in the world, thus used this in the most fierce media battle being conducted against the Great Jamahiriyah in which they ignored the legal and court aspect of the case and instead narrowly pinpointed its efforts on escalating tensions for a mere criminal case in which two Libyan nationals are implicated in and then a political, economic and military widespread confrontation to use the incident as a pretext

to carry out aggressive acts against Libya which will serve as elections campaign material both for America and Britain.

The representative also said that by rushing to pass judgment and condemn by means of the press without a just trial this contravenes all which is laid out in conventions and treaties on human rights and that is that those accused are innocent until proven guilty.

He also said that a majority of people are standing in opposition to this Western media campaign as a result of the news flowing from one side and is heading only in one direction and therefore do not believe what is published by the Western media. However this people are wondering why this deceitful media attack is being conducted against Libya. They ask whether it is just to ask for the extradition of accused persons or to follow up a legal case. Many also wondered whether these are the usual procedures used in dealing with the courts, accused persons and the exchange of criminals given that the world is full of accused and criminals and there is thousands of orders to extradite those accused in various criminal cases however we have never known where a case is dealt with the way it is being dealt with in this case. [sentence as received] Let us talk about the various airliners which were brought down in the last two decades such as the Libyan airplane attacked by the Zionist in 1973 over the Sinai peninsula and which was carrying hundreds of innocent civilians including children, women and the elderly an including the famous Egyptian broadcaster Selwa Hijazi and the Zionist boast that they brought down and don't even deny it. Or shall we talk about the Italian airliner which the Americans brought down thinking it was a Libyan airplane, and what about the Iranian civilian plane?.... And what about the Korean airliner which was carrying hundreds of civilians which was brought down by the Russians over their country. Have you ever seen the West deal with any of this issues and create such an uproar such as is being done against Libya?

Tunisia

Government Condemns Israeli 'Aggression' in Lebanon

LD2102003292 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2300 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] In Tunisia, an authorized source at the Foreign Ministry has issued the following statement:

The recent developments in southern Lebanon due to Israel's new flagrant aggression against Lebanon, the violation of its territory, and actions toward innocent civilians affirm Israel's persistence in its aggressive policy, as well as its scorn for international conventions and charters, once again plunge the region into the whirlwind of war and violence at a time when the world is looking for the establishment of peace and stability in the Middle East.

Faced with this situation, Tunisia cannot but strongly condemn such aggression, and it calls anew on the international community, in particular the UN Security Council, to take all decisive and sufficient measures against this aggression in accordance with the UN Charter and to force Israel to withdraw immediately, completely, and unconditionally from Lebanese territory in accordance with UN Resolution No. 425.

Bahrain

Algeria's Brahimi Touring Gulf To Brief Leaders

JN1902114892 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0755 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] Manama, 19 Feb (WAKH)—Algerian Foreign Minister Lakhdar Brahimi has said that his current tour of the Gulf states is aimed at briefing Gulf officials on the situation in Algeria. He added that the Gulf officials have expressed their willingness to discuss the possibility of granting loans to Algeria and participating in specific projects.

In an interview published in the Bahraini newspaper AL-AYYAM today, Brahimi said that economic development is foremost among the Algerian Government's priorities and emphasized that the new situation in Algeria prevents civil war and not the opposite.

He emphasized that the priority of maintaining security, as specified by the Higher State Council, runs parallel to achieving social justice, stability, and the resolution of the people's problems.

The Algerian minister said: We have great confidence in the steps taken toward accomplishing real security as a primary goal. This is being done without any harm to freedoms. All arrests and other measures taken against one party under the state of emergency do not dissolve parties, and these measures are carried out by the judiciary and according to the law.

He added that there were two basic errors in the past four-year experience. The first error was that the economy was in ruins at a time when talk about democracy was continuing. The second error was that although the Constitution and the law on parties prevented the establishment of religious parties, more than one religious party was formed due to the absence or weakness of the government.

As for the possibility of dismantling the Islamic Salvation Front, Brahimi said that the issue is now in the hands of the judiciary. The Interior Ministry filed a lawsuit against the Front demanding that it be frozen or dismantled according to the law, and the judiciary now has the final word, he concluded.

Oman

Algerian Foreign Minister Arrives for Talks

JN2002162192 Muscat Radio Oman Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Algerian Foreign Minister Lakhdar Brahimi arrived in the country at noon today in the course of a tour of the region.

In an arrival statement to the OMAN PRESS AGENCY Brahimi said that he will convey greetings from His Excellency President [title as heard] Boudiaf to His Majesty Sultan Qabus, and update his majesty on developments in Algeria. He will also confer with His Excellency Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, minister of state for foreign affairs, about issues of mutual interest as well as the situation in Algeria.

Republic of Yemen

Two Ruling Party Members Said Killed 7 Feb

JN2102105292 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0955 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] Sanaa, 21 Feb (INA)—It was declared in Sanaa yesterday that two members of the ruling Yemeni General People's Congress party [as received] were assassinated in southern Yemen on 7 February.

A statement issued by the party and published by the 22 MAYU paper, the mouthpiece of the party, explains that Sa'id Muhammad al-Samawi and Ahmad 'Ali al-Bahri were shot and killed while inside a car by unidentified assailants who managed to flee the scene.

The paper, citing informed sources, explains that a number of suspects were detained after the assassination and that they are now under interrogation.

This is the fifth attack on Yemeni party officials within at least six months.

A member of the ruling Yemeni Socialist Party was assassinated in southern Yemen on 6 February.

Two other members were assassinated in the same region in December 1991.

Saudi Arabia

Oppositionist al-Shaykh Views Pressure for Reform

PM2002161092 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 19 Feb 92 p 3

[Interview with "prominent Saudi opposition figure" Tawfiq al-Shaykh by Ghalib al-'Alawi in London; date not given]

[Text] [Al-'Alawi] How do you see the future of the promise made by King Fahd regarding the imminent announcement of reforms in the political system?

[Al-Shaykh] The royal family promised 30 years ago to introduce political reforms and to announce a constitution and a consultative council [majlis shura]. Actually, there is a draft constitution which was drawn up at King Sa'ud's request in 1959. To that end he formed a royal committee under Prince Talal Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, but that constitution was not issued officially. Over the following 30 years promises were made on at least 16 occasions about an imminent political reform, but none

of these promises were fulfilled. Then promises continued whenever the country experienced a political crisis.

As for the recent promise, most politicians in the country—even those outside the regime—are optimistic that some reforms will find their way to implementation.

The main reason for this optimism is the political crisis' severity and its effects on relations within the regime. We cite in particular the worsening split between the royal family and the religious leadership, especially over the past 18 months.

On the whole, the general situation leans toward welcoming the reforms, whatever their level, because they represent the first move toward developing the political system since the Kingdom was established half a century ago.

[Al-'Alawi] Have there been important foreign pressures on the royal family to make political reforms?

[Al-Shaykh] There have been pressures for a long time. U.S. President John Kennedy was the first Western leader to exert pressures openly in that direction. But the royal family managed to resist these pressures and the main element of power it used in that situation was the lack of adequate pressures inside the country. Then in the following years the Kingdom's role grew politically due to the increase in its importance at the oil and economic levels—which enables the royal family to neutralize or stop these pressures. But the situation has not been the same over the past two years, for foreign threats to Western interests have declined, and so has the Kingdom's financing role, while the internal pressure has increased and become a potential threat to these interests. Besides, accepting the individual family-rule model became shameful at the regional and international levels at a time when the winds of democracy and liberation were blowing everywhere and uprooting tyrannical regimes.

In our view, Western fears that democracy in the Arab world could bring the leftist groups allied with the Eastern camp to power ended after the collapse of the Soviet Union, even though the fear of political Islam's domination still exists and has its justifications in the West.

So foreign pressure played a role, but we do not look at that in the traditional way, which considers foreign influence to be a direct and sole factor. In fact, we add to it the internal pressures and indirect factors such as the conditions that dominated the world after the socialist camp's collapse and the extensive world media [campaign] about democracy and human rights, in addition to the decline in the importance and influence which Saudi Arabia used to enjoy before the Gulf war.

Foreign Saudi influence declined substantially after the Gulf war, and this was clearly reflected in many of the political stands on which Saudi Arabia could not impose its influence, as it used to do until recently. An example of this is the refusal of some Afghan mojahedin leaders who fought the Soviets with Saudi money, to go to Moscow, and Saudi Arabia's inability to convince them of its political plan despite its open threat to suspend its financial aid to them, which was announced in Islamabad by Saudi intelligence chief Prince Turki al-Faysal.

[Al-'Alawi] What has happened within the Kingdom?

[Al-Shaykh] The main change that has occurred in the Kingdom can be summed up with the following three factors:

1. People have become better able to understand what goes on around them, both in their country and in the world, and they can compare their position with the position of others. What made that development possible was the spread of education, travel abroad, and the spread of mass means of communication such as the press, television, and books. In 1989 2 million Saudis of various classes traveled abroad. Of those, 17 percent were women. Any Saudi can easily see the difference between the situations in his country and abroad, in terms of the freedom of exchange of information, the freedom of opinion, and the ability to influence policy and future choices. The number of educated people who received their education abroad has also increased. In 1983 there were 20,000 Saudi students in the United States alone.

2. The social effects of economic development. We mention in particular the increase in people's self-esteem and therefore aspirations. That was not possible on a large scale in the past because people had to work hard continuously without any abundance of means to promote an awareness of their potential and of the environment. For instance, most of the people who were able to improve their conditions thanks to the rise in their living standards now reject what was acceptable in the past from the authorities, and they have become more daring in expressing their personal ambitions.

In short, it can be said that the middle class, which is considered the social reservoir for change, has crystallized in recent years and is seeking a role to play in the country beyond making money and enjoying luxuries. Such feelings are bound to collide with the barriers erected by the ruling family to prevent the expansion of the circle of political activity and to prevent the public from becoming part of it. They also collide with political and social traditions, particularly the power sharing between the family and the religious leadership, which means that the official religious establishment adopts a policy that restricts aspirations that are not in line with tradition, and particularly what is described as something imported by those who received their education abroad or who were influenced by the ways of life and social relations prevailing abroad.

3. The appearance of an organized opposition, particularly in the atmosphere of the religious tide that has swept the Islamic world over the past 15 years. The opposition makes demands that are close to the people's

aspirations, and it uses methods of interaction with the masses which have made it influential in very large sectors of the country.

These are the three main factors showing the trend and level of change that has occurred in the Arabian Peninsula.

The authorities did not easily accept this change, particularly because it moved in an opposite direction contrary to their policy, but what has really been achieved reflects the natural laws of social development. No regime can restrict change in any field or prevent it from spreading. I believe that the authorities have not adequately absorbed the gradual change that has occurred over two decades, have not acted to develop their own political frameworks, and did not permit the development of social frameworks to absorb the new changes. When the Gulf crisis erupted, the internal change had reached such a degree of crystallization that the traditional social structure and the old political frameworks could not endure. So the situation erupted in the form of mutiny in various positions within the structures of the authorities and in the street. We believe that if the regime does not introduce the desired development within the social and political structures, in the future it will be unable to face the trends for change which might become more hard line and better able to impose their demands.

[Al-'Alawi] What is the opposition's position on the consultative council?

[Al-Shaykh] The promulgation of a constitution, the setting up of a consultative council, and the U.S. Administration have in recent years become a source of agreement for all national parties, including some ruling family members, religious and political tendencies, and personalities. That is from the general angle. But there are differences over how to implement the reforms among organized political opposition groups and intellectuals, who all demand a constitution that includes a stipulation on separating the three authorities [not further specified], specifying clear powers for decisionmakers, and governing by law [taqnin] the relationship between the royal family and the government. They also demand a consultative council that comprises directly elected members and enjoys the power to hold people accountable. They also demand a districts system that realistically transfers the central government's powers to district administrations, and that district councils be formed through elections. However, religious leaders of the reformist [salafi] tendency, including those opposed to the regime, are against the election idea and demand that a committee of the country's elite appoint consultative council members and district council members. They also demand that the Constitution include a provision banning any legislation or measure opposed by senior ulema. They also reject any laws that differentiate between the [royal] family and the people, and they favor abolishing the privileges enjoyed by the princes.

[Al-'Alawi] As is known, the reformist religious tendency represented the Al Sa'ud family's ally, but it has recently sided with the opposition and espoused demands for political reform. How do you see the future of that conflict?

[Al-Shaykh] In our view the conflict between the religious tendency and the regime is of exceptional importance in the Kingdom from two angles—the sectarian angle and the district angle. From the first angle, the Wahabi call [al-da'wah] was the religious justification for the royal family's domination. It has also been the source of legitimacy for the regime since the state was established 250 years ago—that is, in 1745. In the absence of another source of legitimacy, an expected split in the religious leadership of the Wahabi sect will deprive the royal family of any religious justifications for its continuation. That is one point. On the other hand, the complete freedom enjoyed by the sect's members through their participation in power for a long period of time has given them power and influence in the various districts of the country. The effect of this emerged when they announced their opposition to the regime, for they managed to make their voice heard in every home in the Kingdom, which recently prompted the authorities to impose restrictions on their movements to the extent that they have been prevented from appearing in the official and semiofficial media.

Furthermore, Saudi rule is in fact the Najd District's rule of the Kingdom's other districts, for we find that all amirs of the districts, all ministers in the leading ministries, and the ambassadors to the countries whose relations with Saudi Arabia are considered to be of special importance are from Najd District. The same applies to the security organs and official bodies whose role is considered to be vital and to affect the country's life.

The Wahabi call, which played the role of providing a status for Najd as a dominant and ruling district, has recently started to turn into a political rival, for the government is centered in Najd. And here there emerges the importance of expecting a change in the relationship between the two sides in the period ahead, for serious results will emerge from within the ruling house in the future.

Ambassadors' Conference Concludes 20 Feb

JN2002202092 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1940 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Baghdad, 20 Feb (INA)—The annual conference of the heads of Iraqi diplomatic missions in the Arab countries, Turkey, Iran, Asia, Africa, and Latin America concluded its meetings today.

Addressing the final session, Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn stressed the importance of entrenching the diplomatic contribution to the jihad and reconstruction march, led by the builder of the glory of great Iraq and the glorious Arab nation, President Saddam Husayn, with the objective of amplifying Iraq's voice, which is the voice of justice; right; freedom; security; and peace against all the forces of evil, falsehood, exploitation, and aggression.

He said: We all have to prove to the world that we have a right and a message to humanity through which we seek to bolster and develop our relations with all peoples who love justice, rightness, and peace away from all forms of hegemony, control, and international terrorism—which the oppressive force is practicing under the cover of international legitimacy or the so-called "new world order."

Addressing the heads of the Iraqi missions, Ahmad Husayn added: We are a state, living within the framework of the international community, that has rights as it bears duties toward this community. One of our duties toward the international community is to bolster international legitimacy, but not the international legitimacy that we see at present. In its name the United States committed the ugliest crimes in human history when it, along with its Atlantic and Zionist allies, launched a sinful aggression on Iraq.

He stressed: We do not want legitimacy in which the colonialist minority controls the majority, which is eager for freedom and peace.

He went on to say: We have always worked to achieve equal relations with all nations based on mutual respect, noninterference in domestic affairs, the right to self-determination, and abidance by all international charters and norms as they truly are—not through falsification, fabrication, or manipulation by forces that want to employ international laws the way they want to serve their opportunist ends; selectively through double standards.

The annual conference of the heads of diplomatic missions, which is organized by the Foreign Ministry, began on 15 February. It hosted, during its morning and evening sessions, several ministers who reviewed the effects of the treacherous 30-state aggression against Iraq and the continuation of the crime of the unjust blockade.

Impact of Israeli Raids on Peace Process Viewed

JN2002190792 Baghdad Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1648 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] How are the parties concerned with the settlement process dealing politically with the tension prevailing in the region and weighing heavily on Palestine and southern Lebanon? Moreover, how will this tension reflect on their stands toward the fourth round of bilateral negotiations set for next Monday [24 February] in Washington.

We can say, in short, that all the parties to the bilateral negotiations are going to Washington. No party has said anything to the contrary. The Lebanese Government asserted that the decision to go to Washington will not be reversed, despite its protest against Zionist attacks. Lebanon also said that it will raise the issue of these attacks during the negotiations. The same goes for the Palestinian and Syrian regime's delegations, following talks between the Syrian regime and a Palestinian delegation in Damascus. The participation of the enemy's delegation was confirmed by Netanyahu.

Therefore, this round of negotiations will be held on time, regardless of the outcome, especially after the Arab League considered the Zionist attacks on southern Lebanon part of natural Zionist shelling prior to the fourth round of talks.

The negotiations, then, will be held on schedule. The Zionist enemy will not lose anything as long as it is pressing ahead with its aggressive, expansionist policy on all levels: Settlement activity, suppression in the territories, and now invasion of southern Lebanon. Matters will continue to revolve in a vicious circle that allows the enemy to achieve more gains, in addition to the gains it has already achieved as a result of the concessions offered during the settlement conference in Madrid and during the bilateral and multilateral talks.

U.S. Media Launching 'New Conspiratorial Act'

JN1702100292 Baghdad AL-QADISIYAH in Arabic 14 Feb 92 p 2

["Hot Issues" column by Jasim Muhammad Hasan: "Bush Is Fumbling in his Disappointment"]

[Text] The U.S. Administration, together with the Western media organs, have launched a feverish campaign against Iraq, saying that Washington is preparing for a new conspiratorial act. This act is aimed to bring about a political change as a prelude to propagating the objectives of the criminal 30-state aggression. The U.S. Administration failed to achieve these objectives during the chapter of military aggression and the chapter of treason and treachery. It also failed to achieve them through the economic blockade, in which the war criminal Bush is using bread as a weapon in an attempt to

humiliate the people of Iraq by starving them and endangering their lives due to shortages of medicine and lack of medical care.

What attracts attention is that this media campaign does not mention a general framework for this American plot; it reveals details, defines scenarios, and appoints persons to execute this conspiracy. This gives the impression or hints to the observer, who is far away from the arena, and to the ordinary man in the street that implementation of the conspiracy is only a matter of time.

We do not want to become involved in refuting and exposing the objectives of this hostile American campaign; it is without doubt directed at Iraq's internal front. The campaign is aimed at affecting the people of Iraq; it is an attempt to shake their morale and break their steadfastness. What is really ridiculous is that the Iraqi people not only ridicule such a campaign, but they are also strongly and deeply convinced that Bush and his aides have totally lost control of themselves, because the objectives of the aggression have failed despite the armies and forces they mobilized, despite the billions of dollars they spent, and despite all the traitors and agents such as "the Iraqi opposition" or the oil princes like agent Fahd, ruler of Saudi Arabia.

Amid its administration's hysterical hostility toward Iraq, the United States has begun to decline and sacrifice more and more of the credibility of its "potential, power, and foreign policy," to the extent that its media and intelligence agencies have become incapable of fabricating a "well-woven campaign" to serve its objectives. To expose U.S. bankruptcy in the possibility of interfering in Iraq's domestic affairs, and absolute failure to appoint an agent regime to support its policy, even through the use of the tyrannical military power, it is sufficient to say that the feverish campaign exposes itself. If "cowboy Bush" was capable of carrying out such a criminal act, he would not have exposed the details and directions of his new conspiracy against Iraq. He would have made his agencies work "quietly" to implement the conspiracy in accordance with the U.S. way of doing things.

We would not be saying anything new when we confidently stress that this new chapter of the conspiracy against Iraq and its people will be broken like the other chapters of aggression. This does not mean that we rule out the possibility of a conspiratorial or treacherous act. On the contrary, although we know in advance that such an act will fail, our eyes—in which we hold leader Saddam Husayn—will be wide open, with our fingers on the trigger to bury any criminal or aggressive acts. Our minds will be sharp, so as to determine the directions of such an act. We will then see whose face will show the signs of disappointment. Tomorrow is just around the corner for those who are waiting for it. [Arab proverb]

Talabani Interviewed on PUK Conference, Elections

NC1502204292 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1606 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Interview with Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, by unidentified correspondent in Irbil on 14 February—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Correspondent] The first conference of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] ended in Irbil on 14 February 1992. On this occasion, we met with Brother Jalal and asked him to speak to our dear listeners and the Kurdish masses on the most important results of the first conference.

[Talabani] I take this opportunity to extend warm greetings to the masses of the Iraqi people, particularly the Kurdish people, on the occasion of the first PUK conference, which ended in complete success. The conference discussed and approved the political report presented by the PUK secretary general. The report explained the PUK's positions on the most important issues facing our Iraqi people, especially the Kurdish people. The report also tackles the PUK's positions, policies, and slogans toward the dictatorship and the need to replace it with democracy; and toward the Iraqi opposition and the need to coordinate efforts, cooperation, and agreement on a democratic alternative to ensure the democratic rights and liberties of the Iraqi people, and grant the right of self-determination to the Kurdish people within an independent, democratic Iraq.

The report also dealt with restructuring the economy, developing the peshmerga forces, the anticipated national assembly in Kurdistan, and the other political issues pertaining to relations among the Kurdistan Front's parties and popular organizations. The report then outlines the PUK's future tasks. I hope that this report will be printed soon in Kurdish and Arabic.

The conference then prepared a new program for the PUK consisting of basic demands, including the struggle against dictatorship to establish democracy, and against war to establish peace and human rights; end exploitation of one another; end national and sectarian persecution; and create a democratic society in which human rights will be respected, as specified in the international human rights declaration. The program also defines the ultimate goal of the PUK, which is to establish a democratic, socialist society. It also defines the position toward weapons of mass destruction and the need to get rid of them in Iraq, the region, and the world.

The conference also prepared the new PUK bylaws. It defined the PUK's political identity as a democratic, socialist organization. It also defined the democratic principles on which the PUK is based, such as direct elections of all PUK organizations, from the bottom to the top. [passage omitted]

The conference also approved the PUK's program for elections that will take place for a Kurdistan national

assembly, to assume the responsibility for the administration of Kurdistan, define the relationship between the Kurdish people and the Iraqi Government, and resolve the economic crisis created by the dictatorship in Kurdistan. [passage omitted]

We can say that the first PUK conference made significant achievements in political, ideological, organizational, administrative, and other spheres.

Finally, the conference concluded its work by electing the new 17-member PUK leadership, including six new members. Six alternate members of the PUK were also elected. These in my view are the most important results of the first PUK conference. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Brother Jalal, the Kurdish people in Iraqi Kurdistan will engage in a historic experience in April, the elections for the national assembly. What are your views and hopes on this occasion?

[Talabani] The elections to the first Kurdistan national assembly, in complete freedom and in the democratic atmosphere now prevailing in Kurdistan, is regarded as a historic achievement. For the first time in history, this assembly will constitute an official body empowered to speak and make political decisions on behalf of the Kurdish people. [passage omitted]

This assembly will have important tasks in the economic, political, administrative, health, construction, humanitarian, democratic, and national spheres. We look forward to holding free elections, in which the candidates run in a democratic atmosphere and in which the Kurdish people elect genuine representatives to this assembly. [passage omitted]

IDF Ends Operation North of Security Zone

TA2102063892 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0625 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] This report has just been received: The special IDF [Israel Defense Forces] units which operated in the villages of Yatar and Kafra north of the security zone have completed their task and returned to their bases.

Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that in the course of the troops' withdrawal, a UNIFIL [UN Interim Force in Lebanon] soldier was wounded by a smoke bomb fired by IDF troops. The soldier was evacuated to the UN hospital in al-Naqurah in moderate condition. The IDF has apologized to the UN contingent's command.

Operation Met 'All Objectives'

TA2102082492 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Our correspondent Yo'av Aviv reports that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] operation north of the security zone lasted 24 hours. The force included tanks, armored personnel carriers, and a paratroopers unit.

Our correspondent, who met with the force commander and soldiers as they were returning from Lebanon, learned that all the objectives were met. The officer said that the force destroyed katyusha launchers. Several short-range clashes with terrorists occurred during the operation.

Our correspondent reports that UNIFIL [UN Interim Force in Lebanon] officers have arrived in the villages of Yatar and Kafra and are combing the area.

Two Soldiers Killed; Three Injured

TA2002200992 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1955 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] Here is an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman's announcement: Two soldiers, a captain and a sergeant, were killed and three were injured this morning when an IDF unit encountered terrorists in the areas where it has been operating since early this morning, in the villages of Yatar and Kafra, from where katyushas were fired at the north. The soldier's families have been notified. Terrorists were also killed during the operation. An IDF unit continues its operation on the site.

Katyushas Hit Security Zone Early 21 Feb

TA2102091492 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] A short while ago, katyusha rockets launched from the north fell in the security zone in south Lebanon. No one was hurt and no damage was caused. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht received this report from UN headquarters.

More Katyushas Hit Zone

TA2102124192 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] Another barrage of about 10 katyusha rockets—the third since this morning—was fired at the security zone in southern Lebanon this afternoon. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht has learned from the UN contingent's headquarters that the rockets landed in an open field, causing no damage. The UN staffers believe that the rockets were fired from north of the village of Kafra, in which IDF [Israel Defense Forces] troops operated last night.

UNIFIL [UN Interim Force in Lebanon] headquarters has announced that some 80 katyushas have landed in the eastern sector of the security zone since yesterday afternoon. Most of the rockets were fired from the al-Biqa' area.

Earlier Report on End of Action

TA2002190092 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1830 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] operation north of the security zone is ending at this time. During the day, the IDF operated in the villages of Yatar and Kafra to locate katyusha launchers and terrorists. The operation was accompanied by heavy artillery. Our army affairs correspondent Moti Eden reports from south Lebanon:

Since the attack started, helicopters accompanied the forces as they moved into south Lebanon. They and the artillery took part in the fight against the Hizballah in the Shiite strip in south Lebanon. The attack this morning started with heavy IDF artillery shelling of targets expected to fire additional katyushas at northern Israel. More katyushas indeed fell here.

The armored and paratrooper units that operated in Kafra and Yatar will leave the area in a few hours. IDF officers said today: We decided to operate in those villages because they continue firing at us. Civilians have already left, and only terrorists were left behind. Their fire must be stopped. UN troops were also hurt by terrorist fire today.

Clash With UNIFIL Detailed

TA2002183892 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1705 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Report by correspondent in the north Hayim Hecht]

[Text] Already today, I have heard several residents in the Galilee panhandle utter the word: War. Two days ago there was tension, yesterday an escalation, this morning they called it attrition. As the evening falls and news comes from Lebanon of an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] armored operation, after katyushas fell here, and the air is full of blasts from IDF cannons, the word war has

reappeared. Locals here say: Attrition or not, this escalation must be stopped immediately.

Late last night an IDF armored column crossed the northern border of the security zone, en route to the villages of Yatar and Kafra, to deal with a hotbed of katyusha launchers. The residents of these villages had already fled yesterday following General Lahd's orders, and the few that had stayed behind fled after the massive IDF bombardment. Official IDF sources reported that this is a limited operation. The force will return to its base immediately after completing its tasks there. This restricted operation, however, encountered difficulties and complications that, if anyone still needs a reminder, again show just how difficult and complicated it is to operate in this mad area the terrorists have chosen as their home base.

On the outskirts of the villages, IDF forces encountered UNIFIL [UN Interim Forces in Lebanon] soldiers from Nepal, Finland, Fiji, and Ireland blocking the road with their white cars bearing UN flags. A Finnish officer pointed at his Israeli counterpart and signaled: No way through to sovereign Lebanese territory. The commander of the IDF operation, who naturally anticipated this, ordered his man to advance.

[Begin UNIFIL spokesman Timor Goksel recording, in English] But the Army decided to force their way through, and they did that by smashing through our vehicles by tanks and bulldozers. There was some fist-fight, there was some argument, there was some physical pushing back and forth, but nobody used weapons. [end recording]

In a short time, terrorists began approaching the site and shooting at the IDF soldiers. Two soldiers from Fiji were caught in the cross fire and were seriously injured. Despite the fact that the IDF did not allow it, UNIFIL landed a helicopter on the site. The Italian helicopter took the injured soldiers to al-Naqurah. Palestinian terrorists from the al-Rashidiyah refugee camp shot at the helicopter. One of the UN soldiers, whose condition was termed serious, was later flown to Rambam Hospital in Haifa.

[Begin Goksel recording, in English] There are ongoing battles between the IDF forces operating in that region and groups of armed resistance groups that were pouring to the area in larger and larger numbers every minute. [end recording]

The new Hizballah leader, Shaykh Hasan Nasrallah, called on all the terror organizations, Shiite and Palestinian, to join his men in their war against the Jews. Go there to Yatar, Nasrallah said, and fight the Jews to the bitter end. The clerics in the villages of the south inflamed what Nasrallah had started, and hundreds ran amok to the south.

[Begin Goksel recording, in English] In the beginning, in the morning, when the operation started, it was Hizballah. Now everybody is involved: Amal, the Communist Party, the national resistance. Anybody who can get a gun (?is moving south) and nobody knows what is happening in this area. We are under a lot of pressure at the moment. [end recording]

At the same time, another round of katyusha rockets landed in the Galilee panhandle. No one was hurt, and there was no damage. Massive shelling by IDF and SLA [South Lebanese Army] guns has continued since the morning hours. Thousands of Shiites are fleeing for fear of the bombardment. Hizballah clergymen do not spare their homeless and tired flock, urging them to fight the Jews.

This afternoon Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir called on Galilee residents, promising that the IDF is making an extra effort to bring calm to the region very soon.

Two More UN Soldiers Injured

TA2002135792 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1330 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] A UNIFIL [UN Interim Forces in Lebanon] spokesman has just reported that about one hour ago, two more UNIFIL soldiers from Fiji were injured. The two were hurt while trying to prevent hundreds of armed civilians from arriving at the site of the fighting between the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and the terrorists.

At this hour, the IDF continues shelling targets in southern Lebanon. News agencies continue reporting about IDF tank activity north of the security zone.

Knesset Members [MK's] Yosi Sarid and Ya'ir Tzaban demand that the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee convene immediately and receive a full briefing on the IDF's involvement in Lebanon. The MK's have noted that the committee so far has not heard a single thing about the serious developments in the north, and they say what is happening there now reminds them of too many things that happened in Lebanon 10 years ago.

'Messages' to Lebanon Intended

TA2002182592 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1705 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Report by army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe]

[Text] Military sources noted that only 100 katyushas have fallen on Israel since the elimination of al-Musawi. Two-thirds landed in the security zone and a third on Israeli territory. There were no casualties. The katyushas have a 20-km range. The sources said that in general the shelling is sporadic, not a massive barrage, but isolated rockets aimed at certain pinpointed areas. Our primary interest, the sources said, is to return peace and quiet to the northern border. All our activity is aimed at signaling to Hizballah that quiet must return. If it does not, it will also not exist on the other side of the border.

IDF [Israel Defense Forces] activity includes firing at identified targets. The messages are aimed at making that clear to the Lebanese, including the Lebanese Government, the sources stressed. Responding to the sources of fire and the pinpointed activity are aimed at making it clear to Hizballah that they, and the villages from where they leave for actions, will pay a heavy price. There has been massive Hizballah activity against the IDF and SLA [South Lebanese Army] in the security zone for a long time in the form of roadside bombs, firings, and ambushes. We hope the IDF is making clear to the Lebanese Government, and through them to Hizballah, that we will not remain silent and we will not permit them to upset civilian life. That has been the aim of the IDF over the past few days.

An IDF unit this morning entered areas controlled by Hizballah to locate launch sites and hit the launchers and operators. The activity has been going on for three days and is accompanied by air attacks and firing against Hizballah targets. This includes messages at all levels.

When will it end? It is difficult to say. We are using various means, the sources said. Today, there was a drop in activity and we hope this signals that they understand and are stopping activity. The IDF, the sources stressed, has the ability to use tougher measures. We hope we will not have to deploy them, they added.

Leaders Comment Before End of Operation

Shamir on Goals of Action

TA2002155992 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by political correspondent Natan Gutman, Rafi Reshef in the studio, and Mikha Friedman in the north in Shamir's office at the Likud Central Committee session at the Tel Aviv Fairgrounds—live]

[Excerpts] [Gutman] Mr. Shamir, what is your first reaction to the buildup in violence along the northern border?

[Shamir] I am being updated all the time on what is happening there. It has been a very active day. I hope that it will pass within a short time.

[Reshef] Mr. Shamir, do you believe that after four nights of katyusha shelling we are capable of ending it?

[Shamir] We are making an effort to stop it, and I hope we will find a way to end the violence.

[Gutman] Can you promise the inhabitants of the confrontation zone quiet nights, or is there no chance of 100 percent quiet?

[Shamir] Up to now there have been quiet nights. I hope that will be the case in the future, too. To make promises is an exaggeration.

[Reshef] Mr. Shamir, what will happen to Hizballah if they continue to shell the north?

[Shamir] We will hit them, of course. We will harm all those who do whatever they can—so far unsuccessfully—to cause human losses. I hope that will continue to be the case until we silence them.

[Reshef] Do you have a message for the inhabitants of the north?

[Shamir] The residents of the north are worthy of all praise. They are exceptional, their behavior is remarkable, they maintain order and make an effort to go on with normal life. They are wonderful, and I hope that nothing bad will happen to them. [passage omitted]

[Friedman] The people in the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] studio in the north would like to ask you one more question about the military situation. It was reported this morning that an IDF unit crossed into the area north of the security zone for a limited period. Is that still valid?

[Shamir] As you know, when the term "for a limited period" is used, then the time frame is not stated. Of course, we will not remain there forever and not for a long period. I hope that it will all end soon.

[Friedman] Days, months, weeks?

[Shamir] I do not want to guess; as long as required.

Defense Minister Interviewed

TA2002155292 Tel Aviv Educational Television Network in Hebrew 1500 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Interview with Defense Minister Moshe Arens by Dan Margalit—live]

[Text] [Margalit] Defense Minister Moshe Arens is with us in the studio, as IDF [Israel Defense Forces] units are still inside Lebanon. Good evening, Mr. Minister.

[Arens] Good evening.

[Margalit] When will the IDF conclude its operation north of the security zone?

[Arens] This is a relatively small operation, conducted at a small distance from the security zone, in an area from which katyushas were fired at the Galilee. I believe that at the conclusion of the operation—and I would not like to determine its development because it depends on what takes place—our units will return to Israel.

[Margalit] Is it longer than planned?

[Arens] Not at all.

[Margalit] In view of what you stated is the goal of the operation and in view of the news we received an hour ago that a second round of katyushas hit the Galilee, is the operation not attaining its goals yet?

[Arens] No, I would not draw this conclusion. We know that katyushas were fired from various locations in Lebanon, outside the security zone. The area of our operation is not the only one.

[Margalit] What, then, do you expect will be the extent of the katyusha threat, once this operation ends?

[Arens] I would not like to make predictions for after the operation. We will take the necessary steps to remove the threat of katyushas from the residents of the Galilee.

[Margalit] Would it be correct to say, in hindsight, that we have miscalculated the operation in which al-Musawi was killed and did not expect such a flare-up along our northern border?

[Arens] I do not believe this should be said. Anything can be said, but when faced with a murderous organization—such as Hizballah, which speaks of the need to destroy the State of Israel, halt the peace process, and in fact does whatever it can—we must hit it. I believe that those who suggest that we not hit it, as a strategy, expecting it to show mercy toward us, are pointing out the wrong strategy for war against this kind of terror.

[Margalit] Yes, but the northern border was relatively quiet for some time, and the successful operation against al-Musawi was described, even by you, as retaliation for the killing of our three soldiers last Saturday night. Were all the options considered?

[Arens] The area was not quiet at all. We have been fighting against Hizballah for several years. Their activity has intensified over the past several months. We paid for this activity in victims.

[Margalit] I believe it was Yitzhaq Rabin who said that the desired activity—of the type of the attack on al-Musawi—should be more secret and have a less clear made-in-Israel stamp on it.

[Arens] I believe that the details of the operation are well known today, and if anyone knows how to hide the identity of the perpetrator, I would be glad to hear him out.

[Margalit] Would it be correct, in view of recent developments, to agree with Ari'el Sharon, who opined that we should have expanded the security zone a long time ago?

[Arens] I do not believe that there is any point in us looking back and arguing over issues of the past. Rabin drew the security zone as it is now; it could have been different. In any event, we have to be aware of the fact that the security zone does not protect us from katyusha rockets.

[Margalit] Does it have any relevance, regarding the katyushas?

[Arens] It certainly has. Had there been no security zone, I believe our problem would have been much more difficult.

[Margalit] Under the current conditions, and in view of recent reports that more forces joined the operation, let me ask you: Do you not expect friction with, or intervention by Syria?

[Arens] I do not expect this at the moment, although I must stress immediately that what is happening in Lebanon cannot happen unless the Syrians want it to happen.

[Margalit] Even regarding Hizballah activity? Do they have so much effect on terrorist activity?

[Arens] Undoubtedly.

[Margalit] Yesterday a U.S. spokesman expressed some reservation regarding the fact that we use U.S.-made arms in our operation in Lebanon. I believe there was no Israeli response.

[Arens] I have not seen this message; that is why I did not react. We use our weapons and American ones for the protection of the State of Israel and its citizens. This is the purpose of the weapons.

[Margalit] Do you not believe that our activity in Lebanon—which now seems to have been forced on us—might have an effect on the peace talks that are due to open next week?

[Arens] I do not think so. Certainly it will not have an effect on us. I hope that the Arab side is not affected, either.

[Margalit] Do you believe that just because there is military activity now, we would be able to make progress with the Syrians and the Lebanese?

[Arens] Let me remind you that Hizballah claims that it opposes the peace process and that it will do anything it can to call it off. Had the Syrians wanted to stop this activity, they could have. They probably believe they can sit with us at the political negotiations and have acts of terror against Israel taking place simultaneously. Incidentally, they are not the only ones who believe that. Certain Palestinians also believe that this is possible.

[Margalit] Minister Arens, the Tamari committee examined last Friday's tragic events at the Dotan camp, and we have heard about new regulations in the IDF. Was this decision made after a single tragic event and not thoroughly considered? For example, a soldier might kill someone by accident because now he carries a loaded gun, and another committee will pass a different decision then.

[Arens] Look, when carrying or using arms is in question, there is always a threat. We know that accidents take place. This is part of any army. We have to be organized, however, and commanders must issue clear instructions

and take steps to reduce the probability of such a threat, while carrying out all the missions.

[Margalit] Mr. Arens, I asked you before about the U.S. statement regarding the use of U.S. weapons, which you did not hear. Our relations with the United States are closely linked with our security. Do you see a chance of our receiving the guarantees? If we do not get them, what would this mean with regard to our defense establishment activity next year?

[Arens] I believe the issue of guarantees has nothing to do with the situation in Lebanon. Neither is it linked with the IDF's ability to operate. We receive significant U.S. military aid, some $1.8 billion annually. This is not the issue at all. The guarantees will help us obtain loans to allow us to absorb the immigration from Russia.

[Margalit] When U.S. sources, however, mention use of arms, this means that they deal not only with the loan guarantees, but also with defense aid.

[Arens] You are speaking about what seems to you to be a point of friction between us and the United States. As far as I know, there is no such thing.

[Margalit] Could you say how essential the receipt of guarantees is for us?

[Arens] With regard to immigrant absorption, it is essential. We need housing, jobs, education; this is certainly essential to us. We ask for no grants or loans of the U.S. Government, but we are asking for guarantees that will allow us to get loans on better terms. If we do not get them, we will make do without them.

[Margalit] Minister Arens, we are forbidden to deal with party issues; still, allow me to ask you this: At this moment your party is electing its leader. Was your announcement that you will run for the second slot the cause of David Levi's competition for party candidate for prime minister?

[Arens] The two are unrelated. We elect our candidates in two turns. Today we elect our party head, and there are two additional candidates, besides Shamir, who want to head our Knesset list.

[Margalit] Do you still want to be second?

[Arens] Anyone who runs aims at the highest possible ranking.

[Margalit] Defense Minister Moshe Arens, thank you.

[Arens] Thank you.

No Comment on Expansion of Zone

TA2102055892 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0506 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Interview with Defense Minister Moshe Arens by Jack Katzenell; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Katzenell] How will the operation in Lebanon affect the peace process?

[Arens] I don't believe that it will influence the peace process at all. The Hizballah organization, these holy warriors of Shiite fundamentalists, are known to be in direct opposition, in total opposition, to the peace process. It is our assumption here that the Government of Lebanon—which is under the tutelage of the Government of Syria—and the Government of Syria itself do want to participate in the peace process and will want to continue to participate in the peace process.

[Katzenell] Were you surprised by the tough resistance of Hizballah?

[Arens] No, we are not surprised. We know the Hizballah warriors for some time. We know them for what they are—both their strength and their weaknesses, and they have lots of weaknesses.

[Katzenell] How does it happen, sir, that in an operation initiated by Israel—with tanks, helicopters, armored personnel carriers, and even preceded by a softening up with artillery—that in an operation of this kind a captain and a sergeant are killed?

[Arens] Any military operation carries with it dangers. There is no such thing as a military operation that does not carry with it dangers to the people who carry it out.

[Katzenell] Is the force going to withdraw soon from Lebanon, from beyond the security zone? Can you tell us when?

[Arens] It would be foolish on my part to tell you on the radio just what our operational plans are; you really don't expect me to do that.

[Katzenell] But is it true that Israel is contemplating expanding the security zone because of the use of katyushas with 20-km range?

[Arens] It is enough for me to say, definitively and without any qualifications, that we will not put up with attacks of katyusha rockets against the civilian population in the Galilee.

[Katzenell] So, you don't rule out expanding the zone?

[Arens] I do not need to say anything further. I think what I said is clear enough.

Lubrani on Tension in North

TA2002191192 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Interview with Uri Lubrani, coordinator of government activities in Lebanon, by Zaram Za'rur and Dani Levi on 20 February—recorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Levi] Sir, other Hizballah leaders operate against the State of Israel and have

declared a jihad against Israel. Will Israel continue to act against other Hizballah leaders, like the action taken against al-Musawi?

[Lubrani] We will fight terrorism and those who lead it in every way possible. We have done so up to now, and we will continue to do so as long as terrorism continues. All those who initiate and inflame terrorism should know that we will look for all ways possible to stop them and to make them understand that terrorism does not pay, that the way to solve their problems with us is through peace.

[Levi] Including pinpointed attacks against other Hizballah leaders?

[Lubrani] I said we will use all methods. You know that the al-Musawi case was not the first time that a pinpointed target was chosen. All possible methods will be used to cut down those who deal with terrorism.

[Za'rur] Is Israel taking into account the outcome of such an action?

[Lubrani] I assume that you give us enough credit to know that we have taken that into account.

[Za'rur] Sir, threats have been heard over several days, mainly originating in al-Biqa' and Tehran.

[Lubrani] A book can be written about the threats made against the State of Israel. We are fed up with threats—not that I am dismissing them, but in my judgment, it spurs in us a determination to deal with terrorism and to prevent those threats from becoming real.

[Levi] There was a lull in the katyusha shelling last night, but there is no guarantee it will not continue. In your view, will IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and SLA [South Lebanese Army] activity stop katyusha shelling from north of the security zone into the security zone and Israel?

[Lubrani] We will live and see. First of all, we expect the Lebanese Government—which claims it is responsible for what is happening in the areas not under the control of the IDF and SLA—to prove it is capable of stopping terrorism, which receives its orders not from Beirut, but from either Damascus or Tehran. That is its responsibility. If it does not succeed, we will. We will not do anything which goes beyond an effort to prevent terrorism from interfering with regular life in the security zone and along the northern border.

[Za'rur] Do you believe that Israeli shelling, even if it is more and more massive, will stop the shelling of our settlements?

[Lubrani] I believe that controlled shelling will help.

[Za'rur] There are some contradictions in the media, and it is worthwhile to clarify matters. It has been reported that the IDF or SLA called on residents of three or more Shiite villages north of the security zone to leave their homes. Do we have accounts to settle with the inhabitants?

[Lubrani] We have no account to settle with the residents. The villages know that katyusha shelling of the security zone and the State of Israel originated from there. The villagers must know that they should defend their property and lives and that permitting such action leaves them open to a reaction. We have no interest in harming innocent people. I believe one of the things that make our work harder is the need to differentiate between those who have to be hit from those who want to go on with their normal lives. It is not easy, it is not mathematics, and not a pharmacy. It must be done, but sometimes things happen that we have no control over.

[Za'rur] Sir, but the outcome is that many residents of those villages are leaving. The question is whether we are not bringing about the contrary of what we want.

[Lubrani] I think not. I think those villagers know full well that rocket fire was opened at the security zone and the State of Israel from their territory, and they know that when that happens they become targets. Why did General Lahd decide to warn those villagers? Because he did not want to create a situation in which he would have to shell an innocent population. That is the sole reason.

[Levi] Is it correct that had we not needed to heed the safety of the residents, then the territory north of the security zone would have looked different?

[Lubrani] I think you do not need an imagination to realize that had we regarded ourselves as free to act there without taking into consideration the civilian population, the situation there would have been much graver. There is no doubt about that. That is one of our problems.

[Za'rur] In your view, can pressure be exerted on Hizballah through the local residents in south Lebanon, as was done with Amal at the time?

[Lubrani] I believe so. To our regret, Amal can no longer deal with Hizballah. In the past, it did so very successfully. There was no need to fear uncontrolled activity in large sections of south Lebanon due to Amal determination to prevent terrorist action against the security zone. Amal sometimes acted against us, but we knew that it was a force that prevented Hizballah activity.

[Levi] Is there not a concern that the situation will escalate and, from Israel's viewpoint, will lead perhaps to a new version of the Litani operation?

[Lubrani] Each operation has its timing. I am not afraid of that.

[Za'rur] Sir, Israel has a firm war against terrorism in Lebanon, especially south Lebanon. We are fighting against Hizballah and Palestinian terrorist organizations. What is the Lebanese Army's role in all that?

[Lubrani] I repeat, we view the Lebanese Government, and of course its army, responsible for preventing terrorist activity originating in an area where they are allegedly in control. One of the basic tests of a government and army is if it is capable of preventing forces over which it has no control from operating in areas in which it is deployed. [passage omitted]

[Za'rur] Sir, Syria is the main player in all matters concerning the operation of Hizballah and ties with it. Syria in fact hosts the Hizballah command in the al-Biqa'. How do you view Syria's role?

[Lubrani] I believe that had Syria been determined to prevent Hizballah activity in south Lebanon and other areas, it could do so. From what is happening now, it is clear that such Syrian determination does not exist. I have no doubt that there is encouragement of terrorist activity by Syria and the Lebanese Government itself. I wish to recall that there are public declarations by almost all the leaders of the present Lebanese Government encouraging opposition—terrorist activity—which in fact lays the ideological foundation for terrorism in south Lebanon against the security zone and Israel. That is a strange situation and totally unacceptable to us. We have said it in the past, and we will continue to say that it is inconceivable that a government that sits with us in bilateral talks to achieve a peace accord encourages hostile activity against us. Those two things cannot go together.

[Levi] Do you view Syria as directly responsible for Hizballah activity against Israel?

[Lubrani] I view Syria as responsible for the fact that it inflames the activity.

[Za'rur] Are you prepared to disclose to us something specific about Syrian assistance to Hizballah units? The Hizballah command is situated in the al-Biqa', which is under Syrian control. Some of them cross through the al-Biqa' on their way to the south.

[Lubrani] I believe you gave the answer. All the activity in the south is the outcome of a link between the south and the al-Biqa' and the south with Beirut. All the routes between the al-Biqa' to the south and from Beirut to the south are controlled by Syria, so that had they wanted to prevent the activity they could do so. The highest levels in Syria permit the terrorists to move south.

[Levi] By highest levels, I understand you mean the Syrian military intelligence commander in Lebanon?

[Lubrani] I do not know whether it is he personally, or whether he leaves it to some of his officers, but I have no doubt that he knows, permits it, and encourages it. [passage omitted]

[Za'rur] The third round of bilateral peace talks starts in Washington next week. In Beirut, it has been claimed that the attack on al-Musawi was aimed at torpedoing that round of talks.

[Lubrani] There is pure rhetoric. We said, and I repeat, that we will fight terrorism in every possible way, without taking into account that there are peace talks; but at the same time, we will do everything to advance the peace process, to achieve a peace accord—I am talking specifically about Lebanon now—in order to reach a peace accord, without taking into account that terrorism is being used against us. [passage omitted]

[Levi] Should Israel condition Syria's participation in the Washington negotiations to its stopping aid to Hizballah?

[Lubrani] Israel does not condition anything. It knows that in the present situation, Syria decides what happens in Lebanon, but as Israelis, we view Lebanon as a sovereign country with which we want to reach a peace accord. There is no basic reason to prevent a peace accord. We have nothing against any component of its population. We have only a desire to reach arrangements that permit peace and quiet and normal life along both sides of the border. That can be achieved. If you ask me, three sessions between us and Lebanon, and it is done. We only need somebody in the presidential palace in Beirut who can do it, that is all.

[Za'rur] A new Hizballah leader was elected, Shaykh Hasan Nasrallah. What is our attitude toward him? What do we know about him?

[Lubrani] We know he is no different from his predecessor. Naturally, when a leader takes over, he has to be more responsible than before. I hope that as the new Hizballah leader he will realize that the road of peace is preferred to the path of terror. We hope this will be the case.

[Za'rur] Could there be a difference between al-Musawi, who came from al-Biqa', and Nasrallah, who is a southerner and probably cares more for the residents of the south?

[Lubrani] I hope so; time will tell. I believe that as a southerner, he should be more sensitive to the residents of the south.

[Za'rur] According to Israel's information, did Nasrallah have any connections with the hostages in Lebanon?

[Lubrani] As far as we know, Nasrallah is one of the Hizballah leaders who initiated the hostage affair, dealt with it, and kept them in detention. I believe he was connected, though I cannot tell you how closely.

[Levi] According to your information, have the threats against Ron Arad's life been implemented?

[Lubrani] I do not know, I believe not. We hold Iran responsible for the safety and well-being of Ron Arad, and we know that if Iran wants, it will allow him to appear in public and permit his release.

[Levi] Do we know that the Iranians are holding Arad?

[Lubrani] He is certainly under Iranian control.

[Levi] In hindsight, were we not wrong in our treatment of the hostage affair? All the Western hostages are now released, while our men are still being held.

[Lubrani] We have always known that our case is more complicated than the others. This is our fate, and we will deal with it. [passage omitted]

Shamir Wins Likud Vote, Outlines 'Sacred Tasks'

TA2102053292 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir received over 46 percent of the vote at the Likud Central Committee last night, thereby winning the race. David Levi won 31 percent and Ari'el Sharon 22 percent.

After the count was announced officially, Mr. Shamir called on the party to close ranks in anticipation of the confrontation with Labor and in preparation for what he termed the sacred tasks: bequeathing Eretz Yisra'el to the people of Israel forever; becoming a population of 10 million; strengthening the economy and security; and attaining peace with all our neighbors.

David Levi said that the Likud will now have to take into account the newly created balance of forces in the party. He demanded that the party reelect its institutions and end what he termed its internal paralysis to prevent party members from abandoning it.

Minister Sharon called for self-control and calm. He called on the contestants to accept the results of the race, to stop dealing with this issue, and to organize for the contest with Labor.

Notes Vote, Expansion of Zone

TA2102061092 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] Prime Minister Shamir has not ruled out the possibility that Israel might expand the security zone in Lebanon, but reporter Jack Katzenell asked him first for his reaction to his victory in the Likud leadership contest:

[Begin recording] [Shamir] I do not know if it is a victory. It is only a conclusion of a short chapter of our internal confrontations.

[Katzenell] Sir, can I ask you about what is going on in the north? When do you think this is going to finish, or is it going to finish?

[Shamir] I think it is going to finish. It will finish very soon. I hope so, because we have no intention to prolong it.

[Katzenell] Do you rule out the possibility of expanding the security zone?

[Shamir] We will have to talk about it, but I have not thought about it. [end recording]

Likud Leaders on Vote

TA2102093592 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 21 Feb 92 pp 1, 8

[Report by Bina Barzel and Shlomo Naqdimon]

[Text] Last night, the Likud Central Committee reelected Yitzhaq Shamir party chairman and candidate for prime minister.

The central committee vote at the Tel Aviv Congress Center lasted some six hours, during which 2,769 members cast their votes. At the conclusion of the vote count, it became apparent that Shamir won with 1,286 votes, amounting to 46.44 percent; David Levi came in second with 865 votes or 31.23 percent; and Ari'el Sharon won 618 votes or 22.3 percent.

Commenting on the results, Yitzhaq Shamir said that he does not attribute great importance to the percentage of votes and that he does not consider the results a victory. "This was no war," he said.

On the other hand, David Levi said that "the election results prove that the Levi camp is the largest in the Likud. While all the other ministers stood at the prime minister's side, I alone—together with my friends—crossed the 30-percent barrier. No other minister could do that."

Levi further said: "I believe that I will be prime minister yet. We will meet in the next rounds. You just wait and see."

Ari'el Sharon also announced that he is pleased with the results. He made a surprising remark when he announced: "I intend to compete for the first slot in the first of the seven-man panels [the equivalent of second position on the Likud Knesset list]. I will not estimate my chances, but I fear no competition. I will be deterred by no one."

Shamir said that, as far as he is concerned, the ministers' status will be determined by the Knesset members. Reacting to the fact that he won the support of less than 50 percent of Likud Central Committee members, he said: "This does not interest me. Once a man is elected, it does not matter how many voted for him or for his rivals. The results may be of importance in terms of momentary prestige, but I do not care about prestige."

Referring to the possibility of setting up a national unity government after the Knesset elections, Shamir said that the very fact that such ideas are being raised indicates that both parties do not intend to engage in stormy election campaigns filled with hatred and violence. "We will conduct a businesslike campaign with no slander, and we will address reason," Shamir said.

It seems that last night's results will have an immediate impact on events inside the Likud. Sharon's announcement that he will run for the first slot in the first of the Likud's seven-man panels means that three members will compete for No. 2: Moshe Arens, David Levi, and Ari'el Sharon.

Sharon did not consider the election results a good enough reason to stop his attacks on the prime minister. He said: "This result does not serve Israel's security. Does this vote solve the problem of unemployment? I do not believe that the Likud Central Committee voted today for continued unemployment in Israel or for a lack of job opportunities. All that the central committee did was to determine that it does not want the prime minister replaced. Those who believe that I will cooperate with the security fiasco, however, are simply wrong. Did today's vote stop terrorism? I do not intend to stop my struggle for a minute, and I do not care whether this or that person won this or that number of votes."

There was an uproar in the Likud early this morning after the results were released, when the three contenders made their concluding speeches and when David Levi declared: "No minister could have received even 10 percent of the support I won today. From now on, everything will be according to the balance of power; no more 'winner takes all.' We respect the results and Yitzhaq Shamir is the head of our list, but it cannot be that a minister who was in the race and scored this result should bow his head and nullify his power. Such things must be made clear."

These remarks won applause from Levi's camp and boos from Shamir's. Some in the central committee claimed that this was tantamount to Levi's "declaration of war" on the Shamir camp.

In his speech, Ari'el Sharon urged restraint. He added, however, that "from 3 March, we must all join in a campaign against Labor." His remarks were interrupted by boos and heckling from Levi's men.

"The struggle is not between the Likud camps. It is between us and our political rivals," Sharon said, referring to Levi's "declaration of war." "We are headed for a fight, and the first thing we need is some peace and quiet, some restraint."

Rabin Says No Need To Enlarge Security Zone

TA2102112892 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] On a visit to the north, the newly elected chairman of the Labor Party, Yitzhaq Rabin, says he does not think the security zone needs to be enlarged, notwithstanding the falling of katyushas in the area. Rabin added that, until now, Hizballah tended to concentrate its activities against Israeli forces in south Lebanon and not across the border inside Israel proper.

Officers Dismissed After 14 Feb Attack

TA2002171092 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] An Army colonel, the commander of Army Camp 80, and a battalion commander with the rank of lieutenant colonel were dismissed after the chief of staff endorsed the recommendation submitted by Major General Tamari, who examined the events of 14 February in which three soldiers were killed.

Our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that Gen. Tamari also recommended that another lieutenant colonel and four officers, ranking from captain to second lieutenant, should be put on trial. Tamari recommended in addition that the commissions of several noncommissioned officers and a soldier be revoked. The Nahal Brigade commander, Brigadier General Menahem Zatursky, was summoned to the chief of staff and a memorandum was entered into his personal file.

Palestinian Delegates Speak Upon Arrival in Amman

JN2002174592 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1610 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Members of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks to be held in Washington on 24 February arrived in Amman via the Prince Muhammad Bridge this evening. Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, chief delegate, and Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the delegation, responded to journalists' questions:

[Begin recording] [Reporter] [words indistinct] Israeli provocations represented by the arrest of two members of the delegation and (?by what took place) on the bridge today?

['Abd-al-Shafi] In general, we believe that Israel's acts do not help the peace process. On the contrary, these acts undermine its credibility. We regret and protest this.

[Reporter] Will you travel to Washington? In other words, are you determined to proceed with the peace process despite the Israeli acts?

['Abd-al-Shafi] Yes, our departure for Washington is in line with our basic position. We will go with sincere intentions to try to reach a just peace.

[Reporter] What about Faysal al-Huayni's mission in Washington? Will he again discuss the arrest of the members of the delegation?

['Abd-al-Shafi] In fact, he went there to discuss Israeli acts against the members of the delegation with the Americans.

[Reporter] [question indistinct]

['Abd-al-Shafi] This is, of course, very serious; it will endanger the peace process.

[Reporter] What is the main topic which you, as a Palestinian and an Arab delegation, will concentrate on?

['Abd-al-Shafi] We presented a proposal on the interim period. Serious discussions will now be held on this issue.

[Reporter] What about the settlements?

['Abd-al-Shafi] We, of course, protest the settlements. We call for halting the settlements as a basic demand before proceeding with the details.

[Reporter] Thank you. [end recording]

Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation, made the following statement:

[Begin recording] ['Ashrawi] The Israeli authorities on the bridge tried to prevent four administrative members of the delegation from participating. These members are: Kamil al-Afghani, Nayif [second name indistinct], Musa Abu-Sabha, and Hisham Abu-Mariam. We filed a strongly worded protest and spoke with the U.S. Consulate. We wanted to contact the U.S. State Department, and Faysal al-Husayni spoke with officials there. We told them that we cannot travel without the participation of those members. Regrettably, the authorities did not allow it, and told us that they will follow us tomorrow.

We spoke with the United States and informed it—as a sponsor—of its responsibilities vis-a-vis this process, and of Israel's attempts to place additional obstacles to each step and to (?provoke) the Palestinian people, and the delegation in particular, in order to prevent us from acting freely and to impose its will on us. We will do our utmost to make Israel allow the four members to join the rest of the delegation. While we are in Amman, we will assess the situation daily with Dr. Sari Nusaybah in Jerusalem and with Faysal al-Husayni in the United States. We will work together so that they may follow us tomorrow.

[Reporter] Dr. Hanan, will the events in Lebanon affect the peace talks?

['Ashrawi] Such an issue requires coordination with the Arab countries. We believe that this is an unreasonable position by Israel. This is more blatant defiance of international legitimacy. Its acts in Lebanon are a declaration of war. This is a violation of a country's sovereignty. Israel is supposed to be holding bilateral talks with that country. Of course, the effect will be negative. With regard to the stand on the talks, however, it is Lebanon's decision first. We are ready to support any position adopted by Lebanon.

[Reporter] Dr. Hanan, how do you appraise the opportunities for peace in general on the eve of the fourth round of talks?

['Ashrawi] At every stage, peace opportunities become weaker. If there is no intervention to impose international legitimacy and law and to deter and put an end to Israel's illegal and immoral acts, Israel might be able to torpedo the entire process. [end recording]

Abu-Jabir Denounces Israeli Actions in Lebanon

JN2002162792 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Jordan has denounced the Israeli aggression on Lebanese territory. The foreign minister, Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir, said this aggression represents a continuation of the policy pursued by the Israeli Government against Lebanon's sovereignty, despite the many resolutions adopted by the Security Council that call for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon and respect for its independence.

In a statement to the JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY, Dr. Abu-Jabir said this aggression reveals Israel's positions on the peace process and has come as another step within its practices which aim to sabotage that process,

especially since this aggression has come just before the next round of negotiations in Washington.

Dr. Abu-Jabir called on the Security Council to take the measures that provide for an immediate end to this aggression, and to immediately begin the Israeli withdrawal in accordance with Security Council Resolution 425.

Comments on Arab-Israeli Talks

NC1502104292 Beirut AL-DIYAR in Arabic
9 Feb 92 p 5

[Interview with Jordanian Foreign Minister Kamil Abu-Jabir by Thurayya 'Asi in Larnaca, Cyprus during the Nonaligned Movement foreign ministers meeting—date not given]

[Text] ['Asi] How do you evaluate the 28 and 29 January multilateral meeting in Moscow, particularly since Jordan expressed enthusiasm over the meeting's success?

[Abu-Jabir] Regarding the second part of the question, about our "enthusiasm," Jordan joined the peace process on the basis that it is one "package" and that the "multilaterals" and the "bilaterals" complement each other. Jordan participated in the multilateral talks on certain assumptions:

1. The entire peace process is one package, and the multilateral meetings complement the bilateral talks.

2. Jordan believes any attempt to separate the political part of the talks from the economic is incongruous. Here I submit a question: Is the water issue a political or economic problem? Is regional economic development an economic or political problem? I believe separation is divergent.

3. The multilateral talks are the closest thing to an international conference. The Arabs had been calling for an international conference to solve the political issue since 1967. UN members attended these talks, including the Arab states, Canada, China, and the EC states.

4. The multilaterals give the Arab side more flexibility to act. Here I give an example. In the bilaterals, we have the Israeli and Lebanese sides. If differences occur between them and the Lebanese side seeks the intervention of the United States or Russia, they will not do so on the pretext that they need the agreement of both sides. In the multilaterals, the approval of the two cosponsors is not needed.

Therefore, we find that the multilateral talks are another platform for the Arab states to submit their issues from A to Z. This is why we participated in the Moscow talks. I believe we did nothing that could be interpreted as a concession. We put forward the Jordanian, Arab, and Palestinian views strongly, frankly, and clearly. I ask myself: As an Arab negotiator, why should I deprive myself of any platform?

['Asi] But the platform you are speaking of existed in Madrid and Washington, where issues were discussed at the highest levels. There was a large media presence in both Madrid and Washington. Nevertheless, no progress was made on the peace process' main goal—land for peace; in other words, Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories.

In Moscow the main parties directly concerned with the peace process were absent. The Palestinians did not enter the conference hall. Some committees were formed. Don't you believe these committees might be steered toward normalizing relations between the Arabs and Israel?

[Abu-Jabir] This depends on how everyone interprets or views the process. I want to look at the issue from another angle. The Arab-Israeli conflict is at least 100 years old. It is an ideological conflict on all levels—information, political, military, and social. As for violence, it is a conflict that has been going on for at least 40 years, during which six wars took place, thousands of people were killed or wounded, thousands of houses were destroyed, and millions of people became refugees scattered all over the world. Lebanon is one of the parties to this conflict.

I did not expect this conflict to be settled at the Madrid conference, which was ceremonial, or during the Washington talks, which discussed procedural issues. We know that the Israeli negotiator has an aim. It is no secret he does not want to negotiate.

['Asi] Why did you participate with the Israeli negotiator in the committees? If you believe the multilaterals are part of the peace process, which in your view is indivisible, there is another viewpoint which says that the multilaterals are not part of the peace process. Is even the U.S. initiative an advanced stage in the peace process?

[Abu-Jabir] How can it be an advanced state in the peace process if none of the basic issues have been solved?

['Asi] How do you interpret your participation in talks on finding solutions to the water, environmental, weapons, and refugee problems before any progress has been made in the political conflict, which means that the state of war still exists?

[Abu-Jabir] What happened was that the Israelis preoccupied us with procedural problems to the extent that our thoughts were fixed on procedural matters and we forgot substantial issues. If I suppose that the essence of the peace conference in all its stages—in Madrid, Washington, and Moscow—is the water issue, does this mean it is a water conference and has no economic dimension? Therefore, I say that the bilaterals and multilaterals must not be separated. If they are, it is incongruous and aims to keep the Arab negotiator preoccupied with procedural matters in order to avoid discussing essential issues. If it was up to me, I would not mind if the conference is concentrated and not divided into stages. But I did not lay the conditions for this conference. I and the rest of

the Arab states agreed to participate according to the conditions which were laid. If you ask me who set these conditions, we will enter other mazes.

['Asi] Can you say specifically on what basis you agreed to take part in the peace process; and, what is the core of the conflict between the Arabs and Israel?

[Abu-Jabir] Originally, we agreed on the basis of Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories and the implementation of UN Resolutions 242 and 338, according to the principle of the inadmissibility of occupying others' lands by force—I am referring to the lands occupied since 1967. On this basis, all parties engaged in the peace process; specifically, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and the Palestinians.

['Asi] How do you justify your participation in the multilateral negotiations, which you viewed as an economic enterprise, before making any progress in terms of Resolutions 242 and 338, the implementation of which was the basis of your participation in the peace process and which Israel refuses even to discuss?

[Abu-Jabir] Is it reasonable to expect this intricate conflict, with all its complexities at all levels, to be resolved immediately, within two or three months? Negotiations between the Americans and the Vietnamese took almost 10 years, and the talks between the former Soviet Union—Russia—and Japan on the Kuril Islands have been going on since 1945. Negotiations on Tabah took seven years. I do not expect the talks to resolve anything within a few weeks, months, or even a year or two. We are talking about honorable Jerusalem; the refugees who are scattered all over earth; about water and economic development; and about states and their security. These are very complex issues.

If negotiations on Tabah, a hotel on a ridge, took seven years, what about withdrawal from Jerusalem, the West Bank, south Lebanon, and the Golan Heights? All these are very complex issues. I think that Arabs should realize that these things may never be done—who knows?

['Asi] Why then are you heading toward normalization before making progress in these issues? Egypt signed the Camp David accord only after it regained full control of the Sinai. It engaged in an unsuccessful normalization process. How can you embark on negotiations on normalization before restoring the occupied territories?

[Abu-Jabir] The Egyptians have signed agreements, rather than one agreement, with the Israelis since 1977. Although the two have diplomatic representation, there is no normalization, and in effect, relations are still frozen. How can we be accused of normalizing relations in one single session in Moscow?

['Asi] You did not affect normalization, but you embarked on the phase of discussing premature issues which might lead to normalization. As you have said, Syria agreed to take part in the peace process in accordance with the American initiative. But it made this participation contingent upon making progress in bilateral negotiations, and accordingly in restoring the occupied lands.

[Abu-Jabir] No. When the Arabs accepted Bush's initiative, I do not know if Syria had agreed to only a single phase. The distinction between the two phases was made at a later stage.

['Asi] This has been their stand from the outset.

[Abu-Jabir] Historically speaking, this is true. I do not know in fact.

['Asi] From the outset, the proposal was to hold a regional conference, which in effect meant the multilateral negotiations. Syria and the Arab parties rejected this. At that time, they stressed that there could be no discussion on regional issues as long as Arab lands remained occupied and the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and to return to their homeland was not recognized. Therefore, they made the multilateral negotiations contingent upon the application of the land-for-peace formula and the implementation of the resolutions of the international legitimacy.

[Abu-Jabir] We in Jordan truly respect, value, and support the Syrian stand. We understand it and have no objections to it. Syria has adopted the stands which it deemed fit. But going back to the letter of invitation we received, we find a clear phrase: Any state that wishes to attend is welcome. Therefore, participation was not binding. We in Jordan could have abstained from going, but we decided of our own free will to go and participate.

['Asi] It is said that although you are taking part in the peace process primarily because you are responsible for the basic issue of the Palestinians—for the purpose of which a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation was set up—you were the most enthusiastic of all. Some observers explain this by noting the fact that Jordan has no occupied lands.

[Abu-Jabir] But there are occupied Jordanian lands.

['Asi] You did not raise this issue in Madrid or Washington?

[Abu-Jabir] No, we talked about it in both Madrid and Moscow. There are four or five points on the Jordanian-Israeli border where there are occupied Jordanian lands. We did not raise the issue in the past because we had no opportunity to do so; there was no peace process in which to raise the issue. You know that it is not in Jordan's nature to raise a hue or cry. When we found the opportunity to raise the issue, we did. There are occupied Jordanian lands.

['Asi] You took a positive stand in Washington, where you did not enter the negotiations hall before solving the procedural deadlock with which the Palestinian delegation was faced. How do you explain your participation in the Moscow negotiations without the Palestinians, although it is a joint delegation?

[Abu-Jabir] 1. Jordan is an independent state that has its own view, political entity, and presence, which are independent from any other state, organization, or institute;

2. Jordan's approval of the Madrid formula aimed to facilitate the Palestinian brothers' participation in the negotiations. I mean that when we agreed on the so-called "umbrella" concept, we sought to facilitate the Palestinians' introduction to the negotiations, and;

3. This does not compromise our sovereignty in any way. We agreed to go to Madrid in a joint delegation, but on the basis that the number of its members would be the same as the other delegations—14 Palestinians, because there were 14 Jordanian members, 14 Israelis, etcetera.

We went to Moscow on this basis, on the basis of the Madrid formula. This was the wish of the Palestinians. We did not impose it on them.

In Moscow, the Palestinians refused to enter the negotiations hall because they wanted to change the Madrid formula and introduce members from outside the occupied territories, an issue which concerned them. We entered the hall and the Palestinian brothers asked for our help in getting Palestinians from the Diaspora accepted, and we agreed. But because of the U.S., Israeli, and Russian conditions, we did not succeed and thus we participated without the Palestinians because we are independent from them.

['Asi] Since the U.S. initiative was put forth to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict prior to the peace conference, there were bilateral or tripartite contacts among Arab countries to coordinate a common stand. The latest of these was the Damascus meeting, in which the border countries directly involved participated in the presence of representatives from the Gulf countries and the Arab Maghreb. Commenting on the meeting, some observers said the peace conference will not lead to partial solutions or separate deals.

Do you not believe that your participation in the Moscow negotiations, which Lebanon, Syria, and the Palestinians boycotted, will affect Arab coordination and weaken the Arab negotiator's position on withdrawal from the occupied territories?

[Abu-Jabir] No, the coordination is continuing from Damascus up to Washington. We are still coordinating with the Syrian and Lebanese brothers and other parties. But as I have mentioned, Jordan is an independent state and according to the letter of invitation, attendance is optional. Syrian and Lebanese non-participation emerged from this point. According to my information, the door is still open.

Let me discuss the issue from another perspective. What is the aim of the negotiations? To find solutions, is it not? Supposing that Jordan had not participated in the "multilaterals", would the Arab situation have been better?

['Asi] At least it would have been holding on to the core of the peace process—land for peace.

[Abu-Jabir] In Moscow, no one betrayed the land, nor peace. Jordan, in particular, did not abandon its right to land or its right to peace.

I want to ask you: Does Lebanon make its decisions with full coordination with Jordan, take Jordan's view into consideration, and make decisions according to Jordan's wishes? Do Syria and the Palestinians do that? I repeat that Jordan is an independent state.

Does coordination mean that all Arab countries should make the same decision? Have the Arabs since 1940 faced all problems and crises with one stand and one approach?

['Asi] What about the likelihood of a separate truce accord?

[Abu-Jabir] Jordan still clings to the idea of not dividing the issue and that there must be an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon as well as from the Golan, the West Bank, and the occupied Jordanian territories.

['Asi] But you spoke about independent Jordanian decisionmaking and decided to participate in the multilateral talks without considering the Syrian and Lebanese positions and even without the Palestinians' participation.

[Abu-Jabir] We accepted the invitation and its conditions. Each state has the right to participate or boycott. I note another example: When voting was held on revoking the resolution equating Zionism with racism, Jordan voted against the cancellation of the resolution and some Arab countries voted for its cancellation, but we did not argue with them about their right to vote.

['Asi] How do you view the peace process in light of Israeli intransigence and U.S. neutrality stand on the bilateral talks?

[Abu-Jabir] The process is a lengthy and arduous one, and I do not know whether it will produce results. I note here that elections will be held this year in Israel, the United States, France, and Britain; in other words, in most Western countries. This in my view will reflect on the peace process and decisive decisions will be hard to reach.

['Asi] To what extent will the Arabs remain responsive to the U.S. initiative, despite its complacency with the Israelis?

[Abu-Jabir] The question which directly imposes itself is whether Arab solidarity can be restored to the state it was in 1985, 1988 and 1989. This question concerns the Arab conscience, and I mean the conscience of all the Arabs, whether individuals or states. It is difficult for me to answer this question. As an Arab and a professor of politics, I say I am not a politician and have never been one. My duty as foreign minister, which is part of my national duty, compels me to defend my country's view

regardless of whether it is right, and unfortunately, this is the position of the Arabs. I have called for Arab unity since my youth, but this is the position of Arab regimes which, unfortunately, have other scenarios. This is apparent in every crisis we face, whether in Lebanon or Palestine, over the unreasonable occupation of the Golan and Jordanian territories. This is the Arab situation and these are the possibilities.

We in Jordan, particularly, are surrounded, and the siege is still imposed on us and on the Palestinians. We have no way out. Despite this, Jordan performs its duty in a manner which it believes is in line with Arab honor and ethics by adhering to the fundamental principles. In 1960 or 1967, Jordan could have concluded separate accords, but it did not and will not do so now. King Husayn was told in 1967, "manage on your own," but the man is clean and honest and thus would not agree to do that because he is committed to the principles of the Arab cause. Jordan still adheres to these principles, and so does King Husayn, who will never deviate from them.

['Asi] Is there a possibility that you might respond to a request to shift the bilateral talks to the region?

[Abu-Jabir] No, not at present. As long as there is no tangible or genuine progress and substantial issues have not been discussed, Jordan will not agree to that.

The next round may be shifted to Europe, and this may be in our interest because it would be closer to us.

['Asi] Some observers have noticed relations between Syria and Jordan have been lukewarm recently, especially since some Jordanian officials referred to differences of views on the multilaterals, and the Syrian cabinet alluded to Jordan's enthusiasm for the multilaterals without naming it. What is your stand on this?

[Abu-Jabir] The Syrian brothers should be asked about this. In any case, we respect and appreciate Syria's stand. Coordination between Jordan and Syria must continue, which is a foregone conclusion as Syria is geographically the closest to Jordan and we respect and understand why the Syrians were resentful.

I met with my colleague Faruq al-Shar' and Faruq Qaddumi at a working lunch on the sidelines of the Nonaligned Movement conference, and agreed on several ideas and that coordination should continue among us in light of the prospects for the next phase.

U.S. Navy Impounds Ship Carrying Meat

JN2102081792 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic
21 Feb 92 p 4

[Text] Amman—The ship "Sata Maru" has been impounded by the U.S. Navy for the past several days. The ship is registered in Panama and is carrying 775 tonnes of frozen meat imported from Belgium by a Jordanian businessman, and intended for the Jordanian market.

The commander of the U.S. cruiser that intercepted the ship claims that neither he nor his sailors can inspect the end of the cargo deck, which is equipped for stocking frozen products, since the ship is small (it has a capacity of 1,000 tonnes of frozen products) and is designed for carrying frozen products only.

AL-RA'Y has learned that the ship's agent is holding high-level contacts to persuade the U.S. Navy to allow the ship to enter al-'Aqabah port, especially since all the shipping papers and documents meet the required specifications and are correct, the final destination is al-'Aqabah port, and the cargo is intended for the Jordanian market during the blessed month of Ramadan.

'Severe Clashes' Continue Near Southern Villages

Israelis Fight Resistance Forces

LD2002122992 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Telephone report from unidentified correspondent in Beirut]

[Text] This morning Zionist regime forces comprising over 20 Merkava tanks and a number of armored vehicles, supported by heavy artillery fire, helicopter gunships, and fighter aircraft, crossed Lebanon's southern occupied borders and attacked the two villages of Kafra and Yatar in the Tyre region of southern Lebanon. According to those reports, during these aggressive operations, the army of the usurper Zionist regime passed the points in that region where the UNIFIL forces were stationed, heavily shelled the two villages of Kafra and Yatar, and entered those villages.

According to the latest reports received from southern Lebanon, severe clashes are currently going on between the forces of the revolutionary Hizballah of Lebanon and the Zionist regime army in those two villages. The combatants of the Islamic resistance, despite the large number of the Zionists and their military equipment, have bravely resisted the Zionists and have inflicted heavy casualties and damage on them. They have also succeeded in forcing back the Zionist troops from some regions near those two villages.

Zionist artillery heavily shelled tens of villages in southern Lebanon throughout last night. The usurper regime's aircraft and helicopters simultaneously flew over the skies of south Lebanon.

A few moments ago we received a report from southern Lebanon saying that the Zionist regime army began extensive attacks against the villages of Qana, Haris, Haddasa, Qabrikha, and Majdal Salim. So far Zionist forces have not managed to enter those villages thanks to the brave resistance of the Islamic resistance combatants. These aggressive operations of the Zionist regime army take place while the UNIFIL forces are stationed beside those villages and have so far shown no reaction.

Amal in 'Violent Confrontation'

NC2002101092 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] The Amal Movement has issued a statement saying that its fighters are engaged in a violent confrontation with the Israelis on the Sribbin, Kafra, and Yatar lines, where fierce clashes are continuing. The Amal Movement statement noted that an Israeli tank was destroyed.

UN Troops, Journalists Attacked

NC2002113492 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] AFP has reported that the Israeli Army is continuing its advance beyond the security zone, expanding its area of deployment, and is facing stiff resistance from Hizballah fighters.

AFP adds that Israeli army units have advanced toward the villages of Zibqin, Jibal al-Butm, Haddathah, and Siddiqin, a few kilometers west of Yatar.

A report just in says after the Israeli Army expanded its area of deployment in these towns, Israeli soldiers cut all the roads Hizballah could use to send in reinforcements, according to AFP, citing a Lebanese Army source a short time ago.

Our correspondent reports that the Israeli Army has advanced six kilometers beyond the security zone.

A spokesman for the UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] has stated that two soldiers from the Nepalese contingent were shot and wounded by Israeli soldiers. According to REUTER, a car carrying journalists was hit by a rocket from an Israeli gunship. No reports are available on casualties.

REUTER added that scores of civilian cars are transporting gunmen from Tyre to the battlefield.

A UNIFIL spokesman said Israeli soldiers informed them that the purpose of their incursion is to control al-Huqban Hill, which is a strategic hill located between Kafra and Yatar.

Violent confrontations continue between the Israeli forces and Hizballah fighters in Yatar and Kafra. REUTER reported that Israeli helicopters have been participating in the clashes, and seven new Israeli tanks are on the battlefield. The clashes, in which automatic weapons and armor-piercing shells are used, are raging at the approaches to the two towns. The inhabitants of Kafra and Yatar say that the Israeli forces have not been able to take complete control of the two villages.

Fighting in Villages Continues

NC2002113692 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1040 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] According to the latest reports from the south, violent and ferocious clashes are continuing between the occupation forces and resistance fighters in the towns of Yatar and Kafra.

At 1230, a resistance statement was issued saying that the Israeli occupation forces and resistance fighters were continuing their violent confrontation inside the towns, in which two resistance fighters were wounded.

Meanwhile, violent shelling of the town [not further identified] continues. Warplanes are overflying the area.

Minister of State 'Abdallah al-Amin, who has been in the south since yesterday, today inspected the villages of Majdal Silm, al-Sawwanah, Khirbat Silm, al-Sultaniyah, and Bi'r al-Sanasil, as well as the government's Tibnin Hospital.

A dispatch just in on the situation in the south notes that the towns of (Rishq Manay), 'Aytit, and Dayr 'Amis are now coming under Israeli artillery shelling.

Helicopters 'Raking' Villages

NC2002114192 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1125 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] In an urgent dispatch a short time ago, REUTER cited UN sources as saying that one of the Israeli soldiers who entered the villages of Yatar and Kafra was killed and four others were wounded.

Four Israeli Cobra helicopters are intensively raking the towns of Kafra and Yatar; and tanks are directing their gunfire at the houses, military positions, and headquarters that are approximately 50 meters away from the al-Huqban and (al-Khazzan) Hills.

Lahd Militia Reportedly Enters Yatar

NC2002110192 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1047 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] We received information a short time ago saying that Agent Lahd militia forces have entered the town of Yatar and are blowing up houses.

The town of 'Aytit is still under violent, concentrated Israeli helicopter fire.

Israeli Vehicles Reported Destroyed

NC2002143992 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 1330 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] The blessed mujahidin of the Islamic resistance are continuing to engage the remnants of the Zionist invaders at close quarters in the Sribbin-Kafra-Yatar area, where they are fighting ferociously. Meanwhile, Zionist helicopters are trying to intervene, strafing and bombarding villages and the hills overlooking them. Islamic resistance units confronted a Zionist force as it tried to advance on al-Huqban Hill on the Yatar front, shelling its supply lines, inflicting direct hits on its ranks, and sending the force back toward the Sribbin junction.

Zionist troop concentrations have been monitored in (Wadi al-Huzayr) and al-Ghanduriya, where the mujahidin are lying in wait.

During the Zionist forces' attempt to infiltrate Kafra, Islamic resistance mujahidin detonated an explosive device under an advancing military vehicle, destroying it and leaving the crew dead or wounded.

Islamic resistance heroes are ferociously confronting the enemy forces which have been advancing into Kafra, where the mujahidin have destroyed another enemy vehicle, killing or wounding those inside.

An enemy convoy is trying to advance along the western approach to Haris but the Islamic resistance mujahidin are confronting it bravely.

A barrage of artillery is currently targeting 'Aytit in the Tyre District.

Security sources told REUTER that three Zionists have been killed and several others wounded. The UN Interim Forces in Lebanon [UNIFIL] reported that one Zionist soldier was killed and four others were injured when a device planted by the Islamic resistance heroes exploded on the Zionist army as it tried to advance on Kafra. The sources added that two of the four wounded soldiers are in a grave condition. [figures as heard]

Two UNIFIL troops were injured, one seriously, when the Israeli forces fired on them during their advance on Yatar.

Security sources indicate that during the battles at close quarters between the mujahidin and the occupation forces, automatic weapons and anti-armor shells were used.

Roads Closed; Reinforcements Reported

NC2002145692 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1345 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Excerpts] Our correspondents in the south have reported that clashes are continuing between Hizballah fighters and Israeli forces and the South Lebanese Army, particularly in Kafra and Yatar, where there are still pockets of Islamic resistance.

The Israelis have reportedly closed the roads to Haddathah, al-Siddiqin, Zibqin, Jibal al-Butm, Haris, and Qana. The two sides are exchanging artillery fire, while Israeli helicopters are flying over most of the southern areas.

It was reported that the resistance fighters are using ambulances to carry rockets and weapons. The reports also said two Israelis were killed and six others injured in the past few hours. Security reports also said that seven journalists were injured in the al-'Asi area, between al-Siddiqin and Kafra, and that an Israeli helicopter fired a rocket on two vehicles belonging to al-Manar television, injuring two persons.

Now to the latest report from the news desk:

Amal Movement sources said that Jibal al-Butm, Safad al-Battikh, Haris, and Majdal Silm are being bombarded. They added that Amal fighters hit an Israeli vehicle in Tallat al-Khazzan. [passage omitted]

Several reports said Hizballah reinforcements have arrived in the south.

The Amal Movement command addressed a statement a short time ago to the people of the south calling on them to resist with all their might.

The Islamic resistance said in its latest communique that Israeli helicopters are trying to join in the battle and that

Israeli warplanes are strafing the area and hills. The communique added that Israeli forces are trying to advance toward Tallat al-Huqban and that resistance groups are confronting them, adding that the resistance fighters have shelled their supply routes, scoring direct hits and compelling them to return to Sribbin.

The communique added: During the attempt to advance on the Kafra junction, the resistance detonated a mine under one of the advancing vehicles. It was destroyed, killing one soldier instantly and injuring four others, one of whom later died. [passage omitted]

Israelis 'Failed To Advance'

NC2002152692 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1506 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Fighting continues to be ferocious at the entrances to Yatar and Kafra. Security reports have said that the Israeli enemy has so far failed to advance one step inside the two towns. Meanwhile, Israeli large-caliber artillery are currently bombarding more than 12 villages in the south, inflicting civilian casualties.

Sources of the Amal Movement and the Islamic resistance said that their fighters continue to repulse the Israeli attacks, and that the Amal forces have destroyed an Israeli vehicle in Tallat al-Khazzan. The movement affirmed that the clashes continue to rage in Yatar and Kafra, and that several enemy soldiers have fallen during the confrontations.

The Amal command urged the southerners to resist by all means and repulse the enemy aggression. It has been reported that the enemy has brought huge reinforcements to the Haddathah Hills.

'Retreat' Reported

NC2002151992 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 1500 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] We received the following report a short time ago: The heroic confrontations between the mujahidin of the Islamic resistance and the Zionist occupation forces continue to rage on the approaches to Kafra and Yatar. According to reports, the enemy forces have retreated from Kafra after suffering heavy losses, including the destruction of two tanks, three soldiers killed, and five others wounded.

Enemy artillery is covering its forces' retreat with an intensive bombardment that is extending as far as Siddiqin, where two citizens were martyred and six others were wounded. The bombardment is also directed against Safad al-Battikh, al-Sultaniyah, 'Aytit, Jibal al-Butm, and Majdal Silm. The struggler Jibshit township was the target of six shells.

Resistance 'Exterminating' Israelis

NC2002160792 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 1538 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] We have a new report from our news desk: We were told a short time ago that since the Zionist occupation forces failed to advance on the Kafra-Yatar front, they have been trying for the past half hour to advance on the two villages of Buyut al-Sayyid and Mazra'at al-Hamra' south of Tyre [words indistinct].

Islamic resistance sources have reported that an Israeli force attacked and tried to capture al-Huqban Hill between Kafra and Yatar. The heroes of the Islamic resistance launched a counterattack, in which they succeeded in exterminating the attacking force.

Jabal Safi, al-Luwayzah, and Mlita in Iqlim al-Tuffah are coming under intensive artillery shelling.

Ferocious fighting continues on the Kafra-Yatar junction.

Three Israelis Said Killed

NC2002142092 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1405 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] According to the latest security report, the Israeli occupation forces are bombarding the townships of 'Aytit, Safad, al-Battikh, Sribbin, Haris, and Majdal Slim. Grinding battles are raging between the resistance and Israeli enemy forces on the Yatar-Sribbin combat line.

Security sources have told REUTER that three Israelis have been killed and five others wounded, three seriously. The sources said that the clashes are currently taking place on the ridges overlooking the town.

AFP said that the resistance has intensified its positions in Kafra despite the heavy artillery bombardment and Cobra helicopter raids.

Civilian Casualties Reported

NC2002154792 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 1532 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] According to the latest report about the fighting in the central sector, the mujahidin of the Islamic resistance hit a Zionist tank at the Sribbin-Kafra junction and set it on fire. The enemy troops are trying to tow the tank away and pull out the dead among the crew.

Kafra is currently under violent artillery bombardment. The report also said that ferocious fighting is raging to the south of Yatar. Helicopters are also carrying out raids against the township.

The Jibshit township has been coming under fierce artillery bombardment since 1645 today.

The same report adds that two of Zibqin's citizens have been martyred and six others wounded. Hasan Kawtharani from the Yatar village and Yusuf 'Ali Dib from Qana also have been wounded.

Israelis Take Up SLA Positions

NC2002163092 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1616 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] A security source has reported that an Israeli force comprised of 150 troops and well over 20 armored vehicles has replaced the South Lebanese Army [SLA] in some positions north of Hasbayya. This change has taken place as clashes rage between the Israeli forces and armed groups in the south.

UNIFIL Under 'Siege'

NC2002180592 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Excerpts] The south is facing its destiny. The Lebanese resistance continues its heroic and bloody confrontation despite its meager capabilities. The resistance, however, is armed with faith in its land and liberty.

Up to the time of this newscast, the resistance is continuing to repulse the treacherous Israeli aggression, preventing the Israelis from entering Yatar and Kafra. [passage omitted]

The heroic resistance angered the Israeli enemy, which rained more than 1,000 large-caliber artillery shells on more than 12 villages in the south, killing and wounding more than 25. Jibshit, 'Aytit, Safad al-Battikh, Jumayjimah, Sribbin, Haris, Jibal al-Butm, al-Sultaniyah, Majdal Silm, Yatar, Kafra, Zibqin, 'Ayta al-Jabal, and Tibnin were targets of bombardment. Meanwhile, enemy aircraft carried out intensive sorties over the area where the fighting raged, and over other southern areas. [passage omitted]

Security sources said that an Israeli force advanced on Mazra'at al-Hamra' and Buyut al-Sayyid in the Tyre District and warned the villagers to evacuate their homes.

Other reports said the occupation forces have brought new reinforcements to the Haddathah Hills. In western al-Biqa' the Lahd militia evacuated four positions and turned them over to the enemy forces, including Birkat Jabbur and Jabal Abu-Rashid. [passage omitted]

The Israeli attacks did not even spare the UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL]. Israel shelled UNIFIL positions located on the battle fronts, injuring two, one of whom belongs to the Fijian contingent and is in serious condition.

A security source told the NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY that a joint force formed by the units operating within UNIFIL took up positions on al-Huqban Hill following clashes between this force and the Israeli enemy's forces. The source added that UNIFIL is currently under Israeli siege. [passage omitted]

Mordekhay: Israelis 'Had No Option'

NC2102084292 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 0800 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] The commander of the area known as the northern region, Yitzhaq Mordekhay, has revealed that the Israeli occupation army sent messages to the international forces in southern Lebanon saying that they intended to carry out an operation in the two villages of Yatar and Qabrikha. Mordekhay said that when the international forces' soldiers refused to let them in, the Israelis had no option but to force them out. He added: According to our information, the Palestinians have not interfered or launched katyusha rockets on Galilee.

'Violent' Clashes 'Raging'

NC2002175592 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 1739 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] An Islamic resistance source has just supplied us with the following report:

Violent clashes are currently raging at the southern entrance to Kafra, which is coming under heavy artillery and tank bombardment. The source added that Zionist helicopters are flying over Kafra, Yatar, Haddathah, and Tibnin.

Meanwhile, Zawtar al-Sharqiyah and Zawtar al-Gharbiyah are being subjected to large-caliber machinegun fire. The areas of Abu-Rashid and [word indistinct] in western al-Biqa' were bombarded with 155-mm artillery from enemy positions in Ibil al-Saqy. Two shells also fell on the outskirts of 'Ayn al-Tinah.

Zionist gunboats were sighted off Sidon and Tyre.

'Fierce Fighting' in Kafra

NC2002191292 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 1902 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] We have just received the following report:

Fierce fighting is currently raging between the Islamic resistance mujahidin and Zionist enemy forces at the southern entrance to Kafra. The enemy forces are directing 120 and 155-mm artillery rounds at Zibqin, Majdal Slim, and al-Ghanduriyah. Enemy helicopters are flying over the areas.

Our correspondent in the south said [words indistinct] and that Iqlim al-Tuffah, Jabal 'Amil, and Jabal Safi have been coming under heavy artillery bombardment since 2030.

Israeli Reinforcements Reported

NC2102071792 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0620 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Excerpts] Further Israeli mechanized and troop reinforcements were brought into the confrontation areas in the last few hours. The movement of armored vehicles

was monitored on the al-Shumariyah and 'Alman Hills and Jabal Basil in the central sector.

Security sources said today that Israel brought 18 tanks into al-Qulaylah plain in the Tyre District, and then withdrew them.

Fierce battles took place last night on the approaches to Kafra. Israeli helicopters raided Kafra and Yatar, from which Hizballah sources said that the Israeli forces had withdrawn. [passage omitted]

The shelling last night covered the villages of Qana, Siddiqin, Zibqin, Qa'qa'iyat al-Jisr, Zawtar al-Sharqiyah, Zawtar al-Gharbiyah, Tibnin, Safad al-Battikh, al-Sultaniyah, Haddathah hills, and Bra'shit. Hizballah sources reported that the hills of Iqlim al-Tuffah, Jba', 'Ayn Bu Siwar, and al-Luwayzah were shelled last night.

At 0500 today, Israeli forces raked the villages of Haris, Kafra, and Yatar. This was followed by artillery shelling from the Bayt Yahun area.

Further on Israeli Casualties

NC2002202792 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2000 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Reports indicate that the fighting between resistance fighters and Israeli occupation troops has left four Israeli military personnel dead and five others wounded.

Hizballah Casualties Reported

NC2102001592 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2315 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] According to security sources, seven Hizballah fighters were killed and 17 others were injured in fighting today. In addition, three civilians were killed and nine others were injured, including a Lebanese soldier.

The Israeli forces continue to bring further reinforcements of vehicles and personnel to the battlefield. Armored vehicles were seen traveling on the al-Shumariyah and 'Alman Hills and on Jabal (?Bakin) in the central sector.

Hizballah Details Clashes

NC2102082192 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0445 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] The Hizballah Central Media Unit has issued a statement on the Zionist aggression on the south, in which it affirms that the Muslims have shown theirs is the only real response and that there is no alternative to the gun for liberating the land, confronting the aggression, and thwarting the occupation. They will never allow their land, for which they have fought dearly, to become a land of (?pleasure), in which their oldest enemy can romp and roam as it wishes, and will not allow settlements to be built for the scatterings of the diaspora, who have been kicked around by their own history. The Muslims are ready to fight for their option until the last drop of blood.

The Hizballah Central Media Unit reported battles as follows:

Early yesterday morning a convoy of Zionist tanks backed by helicopters advanced toward the Sribbin-Kafra-Yatar triangle. It crossed a roadblock manned by the international forces and shelled roads and the surrounding hills.

At the same time, a large Zionist force attempted to advance toward al-Huqban Hill along the Yatar plane. Islamic resistance groups confronted the force, shelled its supply lines, and caused direct casualties among its ranks.

The mujahidin's harsh response sent the enemy force back toward Sribbin. While another Zionist force was advancing on Kafra, the Islamic resistance mujahidin detonated an explosive device under one of the advancing vehicles, destroying it and killing or wounding those inside.

Responding to the attack which thwarted its advance, the enemy poured its wrath on the townships of Kafra, Zibqin, Jibal al-Butm, and the hills and valleys around them. They shelled Majdal Silm from locations in Haydab, causing heavy material damage.

The media unit statement added: At midday the mujahidin destroyed another vehicle at the entrance to Kafra, killing or injuring its crew members. They also confronted a convoy of tanks which was advancing on the western entrance to Haris. In retaliation, the enemy shelled the area and the township of Bra'shit, injuring a woman.

In the afternoon, the Tibnin-Safad al-Battikh-(al-Jumjumiyah) triangle came under violent artillery fire from enemy positions in Haydab. Then the Islamic resistance mujahidin used all their might to confront the occupation forces which were trying to advance on Kafra. The resistance destroyed another enemy vehicle, part of a convoy trying to enter Haris' from the west. The mujahidin confronted it with various weapons. Zionist helicopters fired on Yatar, accompanied by fierce artillery shelling, and there were battles on the town's outskirts. At this time the enemy was clearing the damage and evacuating the dead and wounded to Bayt Lif.

While confrontations continued all around, the enemy shelled the villages of Kafra, Yatar, Haddathah, Haris, Zawtar al-Sharqiyah, Qa'qa'iyat al-Jisr, 'Ayn al-Tinah, Abu-Rashid, and (Mdun) with 155-mm artillery rockets. The resistance seized an enemy vehicle inside which were the bodies of two Israeli soldiers. While the brothers drove the vehicle toward the city of Siddiqin, Zionist helicopters shelled and burned it.

The statement continued: The Zionist aggression clearly reveals the American peace (?army) coming with tank artillery, helicopter bombs, and intentions to usurp. It

affirms that the objective of this peace is to impose the Zionist will. By confronting this invasion heroically our resisting people are showing that they will not accept it and will strengthen their own free will with the pure blood of their sons.

The Islamic resistance is waging the most honorable confrontations. Modestly, and with its men's high morale, it is preventing the enemy convoys from occupying any town or road, and forcing its soldiers to retreat with their tails between their legs, carrying their shame and disgrace. [word indistinct] of al-Sayyid al-Musawi's holy blood, the resistance pledges to continue to defend regardless of the sacrifices. It calls on everyone to take arms and head for the arenas of honor, waging war in defense of our doctrine and land.

Resistance Invites Media Inspection

NC2102064892 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0530 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] Late last night our correspondent supplied the following information:

At around 2200, the enemy heavily bombarded the town of Kafra. The bombardment, with 155-mm shells, reached Siddiqin and Qana.

At 2230, Israeli helicopters again raided Haris and Kafra, while eastern Kafr Rumman came under 120-mm artillery fire. 'Arab Salim was subjected to large-caliber weapon fire from enemy positions in al-Suwayda'.

The Islamic resistance has invited reporters and correspondents to visit Kafra and Yatar to see that the resistance men are standing firm in their positions.

The Islamic resistance has claimed that al-Huqban Hill is under its control, denying the Zionist enemy claim that it controls the area.

Israeli Use of Poison Gas Alleged

NC1502184692 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] AL-KIFAH AL-'ARABI magazine reports in its issue today that the Zionist forces have used poison gas shells during their bombardment of south Lebanese villages.

The magazine says that a large number of cattle were killed during last week's shelling of Kafra and Yatar. It adds that the UN peacekeeping forces in south Lebanon carried out the necessary investigation and sent a report to the Security Council secretariat confirming the Zionist forces' use of poison gas in shelling the liberated villages in south Lebanon.

The UN command warned the people of Kafra and Yatar not to approach the shelled areas.

Fighting Slackens; Israelis Reportedly Withdraw

Israelis Quit Yatar, Kafra

NC2002163992 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1625 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Here is a report from the news desk:

Our correspondent in the south has just reported that Israeli forces left the towns of Yatar and Kafra at 1530 today and took up positions on the strategic Tallat al-Huqban and Tallat al-Khazzan.

Our correspondent also reported that Hizballah's new secretary general, Shaykh Hasan Nasrallah, is personally supervising operations in the south.

AFP reported a short time ago that another katyusha rocket fell on northern Israel around 1715. This is the third rocket to be fired today. That is all for the moment.

Assume Positions in Hills

NC2102061092 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0535 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] The confrontations were still going on at dawn today in the villages of Kafra and Yatar. Israeli forces are directing heavy artillery fire at many villages. They are meeting fierce resistance.

Sources close to the Defense Ministry reported after midnight that the Israelis withdrew from Yatar and the area of Kafra, and took up positions on overlooking hills after demolishing many houses in Yatar. Israeli helicopters also fired rockets at houses in Kafra, on the pretext that their owners belong to Hizballah.

Defense Minister Announces Withdrawal

NC2102081792 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0800 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Statement by Michel al-Murr, deputy prime minister and defense minister, issued "a short while ago"]

[Text] By 1000 [0800 GMT] today, 21 February 1992, the attacking Israeli forces will have totally withdrawn from the villages, areas, and hills of the region they invaded yesterday.

UNIFIL Confirms Israeli Withdrawal

NC2102065992 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0651 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] Timor Goksel, the official spokesman of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL], announced a few minutes ago that the Israeli forces that entered the villages of Kafra and Yatar withdrew a short time ago. No Israeli soldiers remained in the area under UNIFIL control, which these forces had entered.

Amal Says Israeli Vehicles Withdraw

NC2102082692 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 0800 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] The Amal Movement has issued a statement announcing that 20 Israeli vehicles have begun withdrawing toward the occupied strip. Israeli infantry units are still positioned in the hills near the occupied strip. The movement's sources said the Israeli retreat was accompanied by violent Israeli shelling of southern villages near Yatar and Kafra.

Islamic resistance sources said they control the two hills of al-Huqban and Tallat al-Khazzan overlooking Kafra and Yatar. It said the two hills were shelled at dawn today.

'Guarded Calm' Prevails

NC2102091892 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] Guarded calm has prevailed since 0600 [0400 GMT] today in the area that was the scene of violent battles yesterday.

'State of Caution' in Region

NC2102100592 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] Minister Nabih Birri is scheduled to hold a news conference in Barbur at 1230 today to discuss the situation in the south.

Deputy Nasib Lahhud, chairman of the parliamentary Defense and Security Committee, left for the south this morning, heading the committee members, to inspect the shelled villages. Citing UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] sources, our correspondent says that approximately 2,400 shells landed yesterday in the Nepalese and Irish contingents' areas of operation in Haris, Kafra, Yatar, and Zibqin; and that 600 shells fell in the eastern sector's al-Nabatiyah, Iqlim al-Tuffah, and some villages in western al-Biqa'.

Citing UNIFIL sources, our correspondent adds that eight UNIFIL men, one Nepalese and seven Fijians, were wounded.

Our correspondent says that UNIFIL forces prevented an Israeli force from crossing (al-Hamra') Bridge toward (Buyut al-Sayyid) farm. Earlier reports indicated that the force was able to cross the bridge.

Our correspondent says that 14 UNIFIL posts have been damaged. He adds that travel to Kafra and Yatar today is impossible, because Israeli helicopters are still firing on all travelers. An AP car was fired upon, but no one was hit. Some 90 percent of the houses in Kafra have been destroyed or damaged, and the town is empty. The Israelis have withdrawn from Kafra and Yatar positions, including the hills. A state of caution now prevails in the region.

SLA Calls on Villagers To Return

NC2102095192 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] The Voice of the South radio, mouthpiece of the South Lebanese Army [SLA], has called on residents of Yatar, Kafra, and Qabrikha to return home, provided that they do not allow what the radio called terrorists to enter these villages and to use them as bases to fire rockets at the border strip and northern Israel.

Army Tightens Security Around Camp

NC2102103292 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] According to security sources, the Lebanese Army today took stringent security measures around the Palestinian al-Rashidiyah camp in Tyre, barring people from leaving the camp.

The sources said the measures are intended to control the situation, and that they are temporary and dictated by recent developments.

Israeli Shelling, Overflights Resume

NC2102102192 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1003 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] We were informed a short while ago that the Israeli occupation forces resumed their artillery shelling of Sribbin at 1015 today. The shelling was accompanied by helicopter overflights.

Kafra, Yatar Under 'Heavy' Fire

NC2102103892 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1000 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] It has been reported that the Israeli attacking forces have withdrawn from the al-Khazzan and al-Huqban Hills, but that no one has taken up positions on them because of mines planted there.

At 1045 today, Kafra and Yatar came under heavy and concentrated 155-mm and 130-mm artillery fire from the occupation forces in Balat, inside the occupied border strip.

Movements Reported

NC2102120592 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] Our correspondent in the south reported a short time ago that an Israeli infantry unit of around 15 troops and four tanks was bound for a new position between the 'Ali al-Tahir and Jabal al-Tuhrah Hills overlooking al-Nabatiyah. Our correspondent added that two Israeli aircraft overflew hills above the area, heading for Qal'at al-Shaqif.

Security sources in the south say that about 20 Israeli vehicles, including tanks and mine sweepers, took up positions today at the eastern end of the security strip. The

source added that the Israeli unit deployed on the western al-Biqa' approaches, where Hizballah has many men.

Opposing the Israelis, approximately 150 Hizballah fighters took up positions behind the hills, where they installed Grad rocket launchers on trucks, an AFP correspondent said. He added that scores of Amal Movement and Hizballah militants this morning instituted patrols in Kafra village, the scene of fierce fighting throughout yesterday.

The Lebanese Army announced that five tanks, which were among the 20 vehicles participating in the operations, were still stationed on the hills outside the security strip at 1000 today.

Resistance on 'Extreme Alert'

NC2102122392 (Clandestine) Voice of the People in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] Our correspondent reported a short while ago from the eastern sector that Islamic and patriotic resistance groups in the region opposite the occupied strip have been placed under a state of extreme alert in anticipation of a military attack. Our correspondent in the region has monitored a series of moves by the occupation forces in the forward positions of Tallat al-Ahmadiyah and al-Surayri triangle.

Our correspondent cited people coming from the occupied strip who said that the occupation forces and the militias belonging to them asked the residents of the township of al-Mari not to take the Marj 'Uyun-al-Mari-al-Khiyam road, because it has become a military road until further notice. It advised citizens to take the al-Mari-al- Khiyam-al-'Urqub road instead.

Hizballah 'Combing Operations' Completed

NC2102123092 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 1130 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] The Islamic resistance has issued a statement on the latest developments in the south. The statement says that groups of the heroes of the Islamic resistance have completed combing operations in the areas of confrontation with the occupation troops. The mujahidin brothers conducted search operations in Tallat al-Khazzan, which was completely burned, and the Sribbin-Kafra-Yatar triangle, in which enemy troops had taken positions and later sustained heavy losses when the artillery of the Islamic resistance chased their retreating elements.

The statement pointed out that the combing operation was completed at 0800 today. Reporters arrived in the area to cover the Zionists' defeat at the hands of the Islamic resistance mujahidin. Some brother reporters photographed traces of the Zionist killers' blood under the feet of the mujahidin.

The statement added that the mujahidin shells are still chasing the remnants of the Zionists, who are retreating to the occupied strip, after receiving the severest defeat at the hands of the greatest martyrs of the Islamic resistance, which has been and will continue to be the only acceptable response.

Hizballah: 'Let Us Fulfill Our Vow'

NC2002110792 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 1035 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Unscheduled talk]

[Text] O, sons of the Islamic resistance, lovers of the great martyr. Your hour has come. The day of confrontation for which we have been waiting is here. Let us fulfill our vow and carry out our pledges. Let us give the resistance our support. Let us make God's word supreme and defeat the atheist aggressors. Here the Jews, murderers of the prophets, stand at the gates of the unarmed and peaceful villages in the steadfast south. Jihad. Jihad. O sons of 'Ali and Husayn. Jihad. Jihad. O sons of 'Abbas al-Musawi. Fight for the innocent blood and for the divine and supreme cause.

Nasrallah Declares Mobilization

NC2002134492 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 1330 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Hizballah has declared a state of general mobilization in its ranks. The Hizballah secretary general, His Eminence Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah, declared a state of general mobilization in the ranks of the Islamic resistance and called on the mujahidin to execute the orders of the Islamic resistance command to confront the Israeli aggression under optimal circumstances.

His eminence saluted the mujahidin of the Islamic resistance, calling them heroes. He also called on citizens in the areas where the fighting is taking place to resist the Zionist incursion.

Nasrallah: 'God Will Give You Victory'

NC2002151092 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 1409 GMT 20 Feb 92

["Call to the Mujahidin" issued by Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah on 20 February]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Fight them and God will punish them by your hands, cover them with shame, help you to victory over them, heal the breasts of believers. [Koranic verse]

To our brother mujahidin of the Islamic resistance, to all honorable resistance fighters in Jabal 'Amil and western al-Biqa': We address a salutation of pride and reverence to the Husayn-like steadfastness, the Karbala'-inspired spirit, and the Haydar-like [not further identified] determination with which you are confronting the recurring aggression against our people, nation, and land.

O sons of the prince of the Islamic resistance martyrs, the martyr 'Allamah Sayyid 'Abbas al-Musawi, we address you in his name and on behalf of his pure blood, urging

you to safeguard this nation's dignity and pride and to fight with utmost ferocity the enemies of God and the killers of the prophets.

Hold fast, God is with you. Be steadfast, God will give you victory. Know that your enemy, who hides behind his planes and tanks, is among the most cowardly of God's creatures and among the most caring about this worldly life. Your steadfastness today renews the historic epic.

You are the nation's honor and pride while you fight on behalf of the entire Islamic nation.

O Husaynites, sons of Imam Khomeyni and Musa al-Sadr. Your blood will secure the inevitable victory. The blood of the prince of the Islamic resistance fighters, with God's assistance and as a result of your great jihad, will mark the beginning of the tremendous transformation of the resistance program, the nation's rise, and the end of the occupation and the usurping entity.

We are declaring a state of general mobilization and total alert among all the heroic mujahidin. We call on them to faithfully implement the orders of the Islamic resistance operations command in order to secure optimal circumstances for a triumphant confrontation, God willing.

Our wronged and struggling people in the south, your patience and steadfastness are a real, limitless resistance. Beware of being tricked out of your land and resistance.

O people of the resisting mountain and sons of Abu-Dharr al-Ghifari, you have always been and will remain a paragon of jihad, steadfastness, and resistance to all the world's nations.

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. If ye will aid the cause of God, He will aid you and plant your feet firmly. [Koranic verse] Verily speaks the exalted God. Peace to you.

'This Blow Will Cost Them Dearly'

NC2002111492 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Station commentary: "We Have Got The Message; Wait For The Reply"]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Today's Jews follow in their forebears' footsteps, the Jewish legacy faithfully handed down from one generation to the next—a legacy of hatred of God, fellow man, and prophets. The Jews made a habit of killing their prophets. They also worshipped that which they must not. They worshipped a calf; prayed to stone idols; idolized cows, which were created for man's benefit; and made temples for a host of animals and inanimate objects.

The Jews elevated the pharaoh to the status of God, but he repressed, enslaved, and massacred them.

When he was among them, the Jews believed in the prophet Moses, may peace be on him, but turned against him and his God when he left.

The Jews have an ignominious history of deviousness, hypocrisy, and sin. Their penchant for crookedness and crime is both ingenious and inexhaustible. A Jew with power and a chance to manipulate would invariably commit any sin and perpetrate any fraud.

History recorded their vile acts with contempt and censure, and its judgment was correct. The Jews tried to distort history to present themselves in a better light.

The infamous Jews are replaying those ancient crimes, massacres, and horrors. The past is alive and the wheel has turned full circle. The Jews are once again riding the vessel of death, sailing the endless curse—the curse of divine books, of prophets and messengers, and of all nations.

The Jew who mutilated the bodies of children, women, and old people in Dayr Yasin and Kafr Qasim are the same who assassinated Shaykh Raghib Harb and Shaykh 'Abd-al-Latif al-Amin; kidnapped Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd; and assassinated the great martyr of resistance, 'Allamah Sayyid 'Abbas al-Musawi, his wife, and his son.

Why did the Jews assassinate al-Musawi? The enemy defense minister says that al-Musawi mounted the operations against the enemy forces in the south. We tell Arens and his staff officers: The people whose land was stolen and houses destroyed are entitled to resist the occupiers until they withdraw. International law and convention does not bar such resistance. Do you and Shamir hope to occupy others' land and prevent them from defending and fighting for it? What legitimate right do you, the Israeli Jews, have to Palestine, south Lebanon, and the Golan? The land belongs to its owners, who are entitled by international law and unwritten norms to fight for their land. Anyone with common sense and dignity must endorse this right.

You Jews have killed the martyr to give us an emphatic message. We have received the message, read it carefully, and understood it. We have also read other bloody messages from your sponsors in Washington, those who shot down the Iranian passenger airline in the Gulf.

The faithful showed up in their thousands for martyr al-Musawi's funeral procession, and his successor has been elected. But let the Jews know that this blow will cost them dearly. We will not cower and lick our wounds. There will be a long and bitter settling of accounts between us. We will take revenge by any means.

The Jews have probably not read our history carefully. We are proud people and we never let up. Our meat is sour and poisonous; our blood is hot and fiery. We never give in. Wait for the resistance fighters' blows. Our lust for revenge will not be sated until victory is ours or we die as martyrs.

'Time To Make Sacrifice'

NC2002140992 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 1347 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Call. Call. Call. Call. Call. To every mujahid, to every struggler, to everyone who carries the banner of God is great, to every roaring Husaynite lion cub, to every one who seeks vengeance for the blood that has been shed: Rise, go, it is time to make a sacrifice. This call is for you, O you who are committed to the Supreme Jurisconsult rule. The arena is calling you. Do not be late in answering. Go to it.

Statement Issued

NC2102052892 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0430 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] The Hizballah Central Media Unit has issued a statement on the Zionist aggression and developments in the battle, in which it says:

Early yesterday a convoy of Zionist tanks supported by helicopters advanced in the direction of the [word indistinct]-Kafra-Yatar triangle. The convoy crossed a roadblock manned by the international forces and shelled the [word indistinct] of the area and the surrounding hills.

In the meantime, another large Zionist force tried to advance in the direction of the al-Huqban Hill along the Yatar axis. Groups of the Islamic resistance confronted the force and compelled it to withdraw.

While another Zionist force was advancing in the direction of Kafra, the mujahidin of the Islamic resistance detonated an explosive device under one of the Zionist vehicles, completely destroying it. Our mujahidin also succeeded in destroying a vehicle [words indistinct].

In the meantime, enemy artillery was heavily bombarding [words indistinct] which caused heavy material damage [passage indistinct].

Birri Consults With Leaders, Departs for South

NC2002172892 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Minister Nabih Birri, Amal Movement leader, canceled all his appointments for the day and left with movement leaders for the south to follow the situation there.

Minister Birri has been holding exchanges with Lebanese officials since morning. He also contacted Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, President Ilyas al-Hirawi, Prime Minister 'Umar Karami, and several ministers. Minister Birri also contacted Dr. Hasan Yusuf, Council of the South leader, regarding the developments in the situation.

Views 'Victory For All Lebanon'

NC2102130492 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] At a news conference he held at noon today, Minister Nabih Birri, Amal Movement leader, described what happened in the south as the first national Lebanese victory over the Zionist enemy. He noted that this victory is for all of Lebanon.

He drew attention to the fact that the Amal Movement was not with Hizballah, but with Lebanon. The facts attest to this. He said that for the first time we see the Army commander in the south calling for cooperation with Syria.

Birri praised the government's efforts to confront the aggression. He said that President Ilyas al-Hirawi and Prime Minister 'Umar Karami kept in constant touch with the United Nations and the military commanders to follow up on developments. He stressed that unity was manifested among the resistance fighters in the battle.

He appealed to the residents who left their villages to return home. He also called on all resistance fighters to return to the roots and not to the pre-1982 situation, which means not firing katyusha rockets from the liberated areas, not building military bases, and not appearing with weapons in the south, particularly in the areas in which the Army is deployed.

Amal Issues Statement

NC2002200392 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1800 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Statement issued by the Amal Movement's Southern Command on 20 February]

[Text] In an unexpected and serious development, the Israeli occupation forces escalated their war on the south, and carried out the threats that had been made by the enemy leaders, by undertaking an operation which has well-known implications and objectives. These objectives are linked with the Israeli scheme, which is being implemented through all methods of killing and destruction, to undermine Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to ruin the role played by the UN Interim Forces in Lebanon [UNIFIL], who have been entrusted with implementing UN Security Council Resolution 425 and assisting the Lebanese Army in extending its deployment up to the international border.

In the wake of the aggression against the motorcade of His Eminence 'Allamah Sayyid 'Abbas al-Musawi, killing him, his family, and his companions; the concurrent escalation of Israeli aggression; the bombardment of villages adjacent to the occupied border strip; the killing of civilians; and the constant warnings for them to evacuate, the Israeli occupation forces made an incursion in the direction of Kafra, Yatar, and Sribbin at dawn today. The Israeli forces, backed by helicopters, stormed UNIFIL positions and barriers in that area.

The Amal mujahidin confronted the Israeli force with all available weapons, and ferocious battles ensued on the approaches to the villages in question and the hills overlooking them. The invading forces suffered devastating losses in lives and equipment. The mujahidin succeeded in destroying two enemy tanks. Ferocious fighting continues and the enemy is using its helicopters and heavy artillery in an attempt to cover its advance in the direction of the targeted villages. The mujahidin are confronting the enemy with high morale, zeal, and a spirit of sacrifice to defend the villages and their patient, steadfast citizens, who are holding fast despite the barbarity of the enemy, who is attacking unarmed civilians.

The Amal Movement is fighting a most glorious confrontation in the south against a vicious enemy and a sophisticated military machine. It arms itself with its determination to defend the soil of the south and its principled and unchangeable choice, which makes it incumbent on it and on all honorable people to carry out a heroic confrontation, in order to prevent the implementation of the Zionist conspiracy to enlarge the occupied area and force our people to leave their homes under the pressure of hostile acts and the enemy's constant designs against our land, existence, and national sovereignty.

The south today is facing a real war in which Israel is using all its capabilities to subdue Lebanon and terminate the will of resistance shown by its steadfast people in the south. These people bear the trust of defending the homeland and forging ahead on the path of devotion and sacrifice.

The battle is open to all possibilities against the enemy, who is trying hard at this particular stage to exploit its aggression against the south for its own domestic purposes and in a way that serves Israeli policy, which aims to exert pressure on Syria, Lebanon, and the Arab stance in general.

It is the cohesion of the Army, people, and resistance forces in the south that is imparting to the nationalist confrontation its comprehensive character, on the grounds that the battle does not concern any particular sect or area, but is the responsibility of all the Lebanese. The homeland's future depends on this.

Islamic Jihad Declares 'General Mobilization'

NC2102064192 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0530 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] The Islamic Jihad Organization has declared general mobilization in camps in south Lebanon in response to a call by the Hizballah command. People loyal to the organization have started to collect blood and financial donations to support the mujahidin.

The organization announced that it will prepare every fighter who volunteers to join the ranks of the Islamic resistance.

PLO 'Prepared To Take Part' 'If Asked'

NC2002193692 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1915 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Excerpt] Zayd Wahbah, official in charge of Fatah in Lebanon, has stated that the PLO is prepared to take part in the battles against the Israeli Army in southern Lebanon if asked to do so. He said that the PLO will place all its resources at the disposal of the resistance. [passage omitted]

PFLP Announces Mobilization of Military Forces

NC2002192492 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1907 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] The official in charge of the military forces of the George Habash-led Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] has announced that PFLP forces in Lebanon have been mobilized to confront the Zionist aggression against southern Lebanon.

In a statement distributed in Damascus, Abu-Ahmad Fu'ad said: The PFLP announces that it is placing its military forces and all of its capabilities in the trench of confrontation, alongside the Lebanese nationalist and Islamic forces and the other Palestinian forces in Lebanon, in order to confront this aggression. According to the speaker, this aggression is designed to expand the security zone which Israel established and continues to occupy in south Lebanon and to destroy resistance positions in the south.

Officials To Inspect South; al-Hirawi Comments

NC2102083192 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0748 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] In an urgent dispatch, AFP reported that the Israeli military vehicles that had been brought in to deal with Hizballah returned to the security strip and began to enter Israel this morning.

A short while ago, an Amal Movement statement affirmed that 20 Israeli vehicles have begun to withdraw to the security strip but Israeli infantry units are still deploying on the hills adjacent to the security strip.

Amal Movement sources said that the Israeli withdrawal was accompanied by violent Israeli bombardment of some southern villages near Yatar and Kafra, while Israeli aircraft continued their flights over the area.

Interior Minister Sami al-Khatib left for the south this morning. He is accompanied by Major General Muhammad Qubrusli, director general of the internal security forces; Major General Raymond Rufayil, director general of public security; Brigadier General Antoine Sa'adah, Gendarmerie commander; and other senior officers to learn of military developments in the south.

President Ilyas al-Hirawi has expressed his hope that Israel will stop its escalation in the south under U.S. pressure. He

said Lebanon is holding intensive contacts with Washington to put an end to the threat and escalation.

Karami on Situation, UN Security Council Response

NC2002190692 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Prime Minister 'Umar Karami today followed up the situation in the south and the security developments there. He maintains constant contact with the ministers and security agencies concerned to learn of developments as they happen. Karami summoned Dr. Hasan Yusuf, Council of the South chairman, and asked him to go immediately to the south. He gave him full authority to extend all possible aid to the displaced citizens and those who had suffered losses. He also telephoned Dr. Jamil Kibbi, health and social affairs minister, who informed him that he had instructed the concerned agencies to arrange for immediate aid to displaced citizens.

Karami spoke to reporters on the latest developments in the south and the Lebanese-Syrian agreement:

[Begin recording] [Karami] You certainly have been following the destruction and displacement of citizens which Israel is carrying out. We again place the facts before the international community, because human conscience cannot accept the tragedy which the south is currently suffering. We are certainly following up what is happening in the south constantly, particularly in connection with what is happening to the displaced people who are suffering from exposure and lack of housing. We are trying to ease their suffering as much as possible.

As for the economic agreement with fraternal Syria, the committee [not further specified] carried out the final reading today on the draft agreement, taking the remarks made on it into account. The draft agreement will be reformulated, submitted to the cabinet, and then referred to the Chamber of Deputies.

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr. Prime Minister, the UN Security Council has issued a statement concerning the situation in the south. How do you view this statement?

[Karami] We would have liked the Security Council to meet and issue a resolution on what is happening in the south. But following consultations at the Council, a statement was issued. There have been many precedents for this. At any rate, this is not important. What is important is what is actually happening. Hence, we are again appealing to the world's conscience, if any still exists, to succor our people and brothers.

[Correspondent] There was some financial confusion today. Do you think this was because of the situation in the south, or the government's policy [words indistinct]?

[Karami] There are many reasons. Undoubtedly the issue of the south is among the reasons which have led to our current situation. [end recording].

Backs Peace Process

NC2102071092 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] Prime Minister 'Umar Karami has said that Israel is trying to force Lebanon to boycott the Washington bilateral peace talks, but whatever the circumstances, this will not happen.

Speaking on Radio Free Lebanon's "Responsible Talk" program, broadcast jointly with the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation, he said that Lebanon's right to resistance is legitimate as long as its land is occupied and as long as Security Council Resolution 425 is not implemented. He reiterated that Lebanon is committed to the results of the peace process, on the condition that the resolution on the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon is implemented.

Karami noted that the peace process is proceeding along two lines, the implementation of Resolution 425 and consistency in the peace process. He pointed out that there is minimum Arab coordination.

He said that the negotiations will not be quick and easy. They will require patience. He described events in the Lebanese arena as Israeli pressure on the peace process.

Buwayz Terms Israeli Moves 'Primarily Political'

NC2002135692 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1230 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has focused on developments in the south, intensifying his diplomatic contacts—particularly those with the United States—to stop the Israeli advance.

Commenting on the developments, Minister Buwayz said:

[Begin recording] [Buwayz] The aim of today's Israeli aggression against the south is primarily a political one. We must look at it from a political angle, because Israel is trying to force Lebanon out of the peace talks and free the United States and the international community from their pledges to implement Resolution 425, to which they are already committed. We have complained to the Security Council and today we are mustering all our friends. We ask the international community to respond to this appeal, which is a test for the credibility of the United Nations, the Security Council, the new UN general secretary, and the international community which is talking about international legitimacy and laws.

Raising the issues of human rights, freedom, and democracy will be useless if the Israeli aggression against the south continues. It would be better for the international community to deal directly with problems that aim to disrupt these international principles before dealing with other problems.

[Unidentified correspondent] Have we notified the United States of this aggression?

[Buwayz] Of course. We are in constant touch with the United States through its embassy in Beirut and through ours in Washington. The Lebanese delegation to the peace talks left today and it will play an additional role in Washington, following up the events in the south. [end recording]

Al-Murr Chairs Meeting, Comments on Situation

NC2002184492 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1820 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Defense Minister Michel al-Murr is chairing a meeting this evening of Lebanese Army staff officers to review and follow up on the security situation in southern Lebanon. Al-Murr told our radio that the Army has been placed on maximum alert, and that during his tour of the Army positions in southern Lebanon today, Army Commander General Emile Lahhud emphasized the orders made by the Army command to confront any aggression.

Al-Murr also said that the Foreign Ministry was asked today to contact the Security Council and the United Nations to notify them that the Israeli military operations are taking place in the area where the UN Interim Force in Lebanon is deployed. The Security Council and the United Nations were asked to take the necessary steps. Al-Murr also noted that the Foreign Ministry will contact U.S. officials to brief them on the situation in southern Lebanon.

Army Commander Gen. Emile Lahhud returned to Beirut this evening following an inspection tour of southern Lebanon.

Cables UNIFIL Command

NC2002221992 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2115 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Defense Minister Michel al-Murr has sent a cable to the command of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL]. The cable said that the military operations being launched by the Israeli enemy are continuing and are taking place in the UNIFIL area of deployment. The cable expressed the hope that the UNIFIL command will notify the Security Council and the UN secretary general of the details of the operations in order to take the necessary measures to immediately stop the aggression.

Army Commander Addresses Troops in South 20 Feb

NC2102063992 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Statement by the Defense Ministry's information department issued on 20 February]

[Text] In view of the fast-breaking developments in the south, and Israeli attacks on villages in which the UN Interim Force in Lebanon is deployed, Army Commander General Emile Lahhud inspected military units based in the south yesterday morning. He toured Army positions close to those of the enemy. In one of them, Gen. Lahhud emphasized the only resistance option, saying: The stage through which we are passing is very delicate, and our battle is to defend the land. This is an honor for us. We will overcome this through the force of our determination and resolution, and we will respond to any aggression by any available means. Nothing takes priority over our sacred right to defend every inch of our land. Stay firm in your positions. The land is yours and its people are your kin and we must guard them.

Gen. Lahhud added: Our strength lies in our unity, defending our land with the support of fraternal Syria. The world will be on our side. Your presence shows the will to defend this land and its people.

Interior Minister Comments on al-Musawi Killing

NC2002124192 (Clandestine) Voice of the People in Arabic to Lebanon 1140 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] The interior minister, Major General Sami al-Khatib, believes that a Security Council reaction to the dangerous and repeated aggression against the south is the least that could be expected. In a statement to Voice of the People this morning, Minister al-Khatib wondered whether Lebanon's friends and the international community care about Lebanon's sovereignty, when Israel can publicly assassinate a political leader inside Lebanese territory and declare that it was responsible.

Minister al-Khatib adds: The least that can be said about this Israeli act is that it shows total disregard for and violates all international norms and values.

Russian Ambassador Views Israeli Actions

NC1902155292 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] Russian Ambassador Gennadiy Ilichev has called on Marwan Hamadah, minister of economy and trade. The ambassador described the Israeli hostilities in south Lebanon as an aggression against Lebanon's sovereignty. He noted that Israel's actions are absolutely incompatible with the new regional and international thinking.

He said that Israel's behavior does not affect the progress of the peace conference because the peace process is developing and will continue to develop. He urged the parties concerned to participate actively in the peace conference.

He said that the crime of 'Abbas al-Musawi's assassination was primarily a political assassination targeting Lebanon's sovereignty and safety.

Delegation Leaves for Washington Negotiations

NC2002094492 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0853 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] The Lebanese delegation to the bilateral negotiations left Beirut at 0900 today to attend the fourth round of bilateral negotiations, due to begin on 24 February. They boarded an Air France plane that will go to Washington via Paris.

Chief of Staff Back From Cairo Consultations

JN2002184892 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1815 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Hikmat al-Shihabi, chief of staff of the Army and the Armed Forces, returned to Damascus with his delegation today following a visit of several days to Egypt at the invitation of Egyptian Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Salah Halabi. During the visit, he met with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and a number of military officials.

In a statement following the meeting, the chief of staff said that the big terrorist act Israel has recently carried out in southern Lebanon, and the escalation it is now carrying out, will not serve the march of peace in the region.

General al-Shihabi added: Continuing these measures will endanger this march and cause many complications, the repercussions of which Israel must bear.

Asked about reports that Syria will support Lebanon to contain what is currently taking place, the chief of staff said: It is only natural that we should help defend our brothers in Lebanon. It is our duty, and if Lebanon is attacked we will be there by its side.

He stressed that what is going on in southern Lebanon will create major complications for the peace march in the Middle East.

Concluding his statement, Gen. al-Shihabi called on the superpowers and all states to help stop this great act of international terrorism and to put an end to it, because it does not serve anyone's interests. It also violates international resolutions.

Damascus 'Closely Watching' Lebanon Events

JN2002203992 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 2010 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Dispatch from 'Abdallah al-Dardari in Damascus; from the "Panorama" program]

[Excerpt] Damascus is closely watching the serious developments in southern Lebanon, and considers them a threat to the coming peace talks. Informed circles in the Syrian capital say that the Israeli allegation that the attack on southern Lebanon is an act of self-defense is false and not acceptable. These circles noted the assertions by several American officials that the American weapons used by Israel in southern Lebanon are not for self-defense. Washington gave Israel these weapons for self-defense. The informed circles affirmed that as long as the occupation continues, the only option before the Lebanese is resistance, because occupation—in accordance with international law—is a form of aggression. [passage omitted]

Newspaper: Shamir To Face 'Solid Arab Stand'

JN2002123092 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0930 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Damascus, 20 Feb (SANA)—AL-THAWRAH has emphasized that the solid Arab stand Israel is now facing at the negotiating table will be faced again on the battleground. The paper also questions the credibility of the U.S. position toward the Israeli escalation, which is aimed at torpedoing the peace process.

In an commentary today, the paper says: Yitzhaq Shamir is beating the drums of war before the start of a new round of peace talks. AL-THAWRAH also recalls Israeli Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon's statement that peace leads to war.

The paper adds: Shamir was clearer than Sharon when he linked his talk about war with his statement that the Arabs should accept the existence of the Israelis in Greater Israel. It was Shamir who first raised the slogan that intensive immigration requires a Greater Israel.

The paper considers the escalation of Israeli aggression against Lebanon a translation of Shamir's statments then and now. It wonders whether the continuous attacks are aimed at exerting psychological pressure by military means, taming the Arabs who refuse to make concessions at the negotiating table, or keeping them away from this table.

Concluding, the paper says: All this is a part of an objective sought by Shamir after facing a solid Arab stand at the table of negotiations—a stance that will also face him on the battleground. There remains a question about the credibility of the U.S. attitude toward all that happened and is happening.

Israeli Raids 'Fresh Blow to Peace Process'

JN2002163792 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Over the past three days, the Israeli bombardment of southern Lebanon has set the region afire and triggered a massive exodus from dozens of villages. Among other aims, the savage bombardment must have set out to deal a fresh blow to the peace process. The Israeli prime minister's threat to sow death and destruction in southern Lebanon, and his raising prospects of a large-scale offensive unless a halt is called to national resistance, echo the warnings issued by Shamir and other Israeli officials for the Palestinians to terminate the intifadah, and must also be seen in the context of other threats made against Syria. All these threats fall within the framework of a Zionist pattern of bullying the Arabs and getting them to renounce their rights and territory and reconcile themselves with the Greater Israel design.

It was the enemy that initiated the attacks against southern Lebanon, when its aircraft raided Palestinian camps and neighboring villages and strafed the convoy of 'Abbas al-Musawi, killing him and his family. The enemy has acknowledged that the raids on Lebanon are not related to what is taking place in the occupied Palestinian territory. Yitzhaq Shamir has bragged that he will pursue what he called terrorists wherever they are, meaning those engaged in national resistance to the occupation. He ordered the Israeli army to brace for war, and declared that Zionist settlement shall continue unabated throughout the occupied Arab land. Shamir has unveiled a plan to turn the existing settlements into proper Jewish cities, and urged that Arabs come to terms with the reality of Greater Israel. With the Washington talks set for 24 February—only a few days away—it is not surprising that Shamir should have chosen to heat things up in the region. Observers have, however, been somewhat taken aback by the scale and intensity of the Israeli aggression; aircraft, gunboats, and artillery has been deployed and a number of southern villages overrun with a view to wiping out the national resistance.

The apparent immediate goal of the aggression is to bully the Lebanese Government and get it to steer a course away from Syria and a unified Arab position, as well as to consent to such Israeli demands as the revival of the 17 May agreement. The aggression may also be meant to send the following message to all the Arabs and the international community: All concerned must indulge Zionist expansionism; and cease demanding that Zionist leaders heed UN resolutions, adhere to the principle of land for peace, or recognize Palestinian rights.

In short, Yitzhaq Shamir wants the Arabs to renounce their claims to the Golan Heights; southern Lebanon; and the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem in return for a peace treaty. He also wants to drag the Arabs into the kind of regional cooperation whereby they stand to lose the most and he stands to gain the most. Given such an expansionist and belligerent mentality, it is natural that the Washington talks should have failed to yield any positive outcome, and that the forthcoming talks will turn out to be similarly fruitless.

It was no coincidence that the Israeli prime minister should have voiced the hope that the Zionist aggression will not set back the peace process. Yitzhaq Shamir is using the talks and the aggression to advance his election chances, and is driving at convincing the Israeli electorate that peace and settlement activity are not incompatible. If the Shamir blueprint is to be thwarted, a united and determined Arab posture is a must. The Lebanese Government, for its part, has intimated that it will stand up to the Israeli aggression, and Syria has placed its full weight behind its Lebanese brothers. It is of critical importance that intra-Arab coordination be maintained on all fronts, and that the enemy be made to understand that its protestations of peace are at odds with acts of aggression. It must be made amply clear to the enemy that its protestations of peace are irreconcilable with settlement building, and that as long as occupation persists and Palestinian rights continue to be denied, there can be no peace in the region. Further, Israel must be made to realize that the Arabs are resolved to prevent the Israeli prime minister and his supporters from turning the peace process into an election issue.

By targeting women, children, and the elderly in southern Lebanon, and provoking an exodus of thousands from their villages and hamlets, Shamir has unmasked his sinister, terrorist face for the whole world to see. After the Israeli prime minister has used the peace process as a cover for aggression and expansion, it is high time the international community and the United States made their position absolutely clear.

Newspapers Comment

JN2102084492 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0530 GMT 21 Feb 92

[From the press review]

[Text] In its editorial today, AL-BA'TH comments on the slogan being used in the current Israeli election campaign. It says: The Likud leadership has launched fresh aggression against Lebanese villages as the first slogan of its election propaganda to confront Yitzhaq Rabin, the new leader of the Israeli Labor Party, and his supporters. The paper explains that Rabin understands the meaning of the Israeli slogan, as he himself often worked to implement it in the West Bank, Gaza, and southern Lebanon. He himself has raised the slogan of breaking the bones of Arab children and of poisoning Arab embryos in their mothers' wombs, as part of the demographic dimension of the Israeli strategy.

AL-BA'TH views the differences among Israeli leaders, saying that they center on the means and style of killing Arabs and not on who serves the cause of peace more than the other.

Concluding its editorial, AL-BA'TH says: If the Arabs have been eager to respond to international will by supporting the peace efforts, they, in light of what Israel is doing, will not accept duality in the enforcement of international resolutions, nor will they accept that the UN resolutions, which condemn the usurper and support rights and their rightful owners, be invalidated. AL-BA'TH rejects any linkage between the denunciation of the aggression and Zionist allegations. Israel is waging a declared, sanguinary war against secure Lebanese villages. The Lebanese people have the right to defend themselves and their territory. For the sake of the credibility of the international charter, Israel must be subjected to the sanctions stipulated by those sanctions [as heard].

Under the headline "The Urgent Mission," the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says: Despite the clarity of the road to peace and the clarity of the starting point that should constitute the basic step in the peace process,

Israel has opted for another road; a road that not only contrasts with peace and its pillars, but will also eventually lead to the collapse of the entire peace process and to making the objectives of the peace process more than impossible to achieve. This is best evidenced by Israel's grave escalation of its aggression in southern Lebanon.

AL-THAWRAH views the aggression against the south as a move intended to put pressure on Lebanon and the Arabs to accept Israeli terms of settlement, which focus on draining the resolutions of international legitimacy of all their substance.

AL-THAWRAH affirms that the Arabs and the international community have offered many chances to render the peace process successful. Israel, however, has worked consistently to waste all of these chances. In light of this contradiction between the Arab and international position, on the one hand, and the Israeli stand vis-a-vis the peace process on the other, international legitimacy is now urgently required to assume its full responsibility by holding Israel accountable for obstructing the peace process.

In another commentary, AL-THAWRAH deals with the meaning of Israel's premeditated political and military escalation on the eve of the fourth round of Washington talks. The paper says: Everyone agrees that the peace process has encountered a serious impasse and deadlock, and that the region has entered an extremely complicated and serious phase as a result of Israel's aggressive behavior and ultra-stubborn, arrogant, and defiant course; and its refusal to abide by international law or to accept the land-for-peace principle. The recent provocative Israeli statements are full of warnings, threats, and a spirit of rancor, coupled with an invasion and the firing of thousands of shells on the villages of southern Lebanon. Such statements, which coincide with the planned slaughter of the Palestinian people and an escalation of settlement activity, are a continuation of the flagrant war that Israel has already declared against peace and the international community.

Bangladesh

Burmese Refugee Issue 'Of Great Concern'

Officials 'Alarmed' by Influx

BK1902162692 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] Bangladesh has described the unabated influx of Myanmar Muslims into its territory as a matter of great concern and hoped that the ongoing diplomatic efforts to resolve the issue will produce quick and positive results. Briefing the members of the Overseas Correspondents Association in Dhaka today, Home Minister Abdul Majid Chowdhury said the government is alarmed by the continuing exodus as more than 50,000 refugees are already in Bangladesh and many more are coming every day. Mr. Chowdhury said Bangladesh is looking forward to the visit of the Myanmar Foreign Minister, Ohn Gyaw, to Dhaka when a fruitful discussion on the refugee issue is expected. Meanwhile, the government is looking after the refugees with [word indistinct] as it cannot force their return because of (?reasons) of security.

EC Announces Emergency Aid

BK2002154992 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] The European Commission [EC] has announced emergency aid of 5 lakh ECU [European currency unit] to help Bangladesh cope with the influx of Myanmar [Burma] Muslim refugees. The announcement was made by the EC commissioner Abel Mascutes while visiting Bangladesh Foreign Minister Mustafizur Rahman met him in Brussels. Mr. Abel said the amount might be doubled shortly. Mr. Rahman informed the EC official that the influx of Rohingya refugees has posed a serious problem for Bangladesh.

India

Article Sees U.S. Playing Nuclear 'Game'

BK2102072992 Delhi PATRIOT in English 9 Feb 92 p 1

[Article by Cecil Victor under "Analysis" column entitled: "The Nuclear "Chakra Vyuh [encircling maneuver]"]

[Text] So Pakistan has finally said: "Yes, I have it."

The remarkable thing is not that it has, but the moment it has chosen to say it. It is a moment of heightened tension between the two countries, tension generated by graduated escalation of separatism in Punjab and Kashmir.

The world already knew that Pakistan has the bomb because George Bush told us so in October 1990. His too was a preventive manoeuvre to make India pause and reconsider any military option which ought to be logical after the failure of "confidence-building" dialogues and an escalation of Pakistani support to the terrorists.

The expose has a definite purpose. It changes the rules of the game if a war is to be fought over Kashmir. The Americans do not want a war because, in spite of the high-tech arsenal it has provided Pakistan over the past two decades (and continues to do so even after the much-trumpeted embargo on military assistance) it knows what could happen to Pakistan and the region as a whole.

That is why Washington has been putting pressure on successive Indian Governments to continue a dialogue with Pakistan even though that country has been assaulting Indian territorial integrity with impunity (and not a little help from many of the European Community members who are now asking us not to use "disproportionate force" in dealing with a premeditated and orchestrated assault on our sovereignty and territorial integrity.)

The orchestration is part of the US-Pak symphony (in spite of the general impression sought to be created by the sudden non- certification that Pakistan does not possess the atomic bomb-making capability.) And the orchestration, in turn, has a purpose.

George Bush recently admitted that the idea of a five-power conference the US, Russia, China, Pakistan and India for a regional non-proliferation arrangement was originally American. The Americans have, by their annual certificate of good nuclear conduct on the part of Pakistan, provided the cover for the clandestine Pakistan military capability at par with that of India so that any attempt at a liberation of Kashmir a la Bangladesh would be thwarted if "talks" fail.

With that end in view, the US also supplies state-of-the-art weaponry to Pakistan (on the plea that it would prevent Pakistan from seeking a nuclear pacifier). This, because it knew that in the final analysis if its calculations did not fructify, the next Indo- Pak war would be a hard-hitting conflict with conventional weapons.

The whole gameplan had a single purpose the maintenance of the status quo in Kashmir. The status quo means that Pakistan must be allowed to keep what it has captured by subterfuge. That, in the first instance, must be legitimised by agreement reached through negotiations between India and Pakistan to make the Line of Actual control in Kashmir an international boundary.

The next step would be the ignition of a "spontaneous uprising" in Kashmir that would see Pakistani regular troops in disguise rushing across the Line of Actual Control to the rescue of their Kashmiri brethren.

The US, which Indians are being conditioned to believe has turned its back on Pakistan and is beginning to acknowledge India's "important" place in the region, has been playing its own game all along.

Congress-I Party Sweeps Punjab Polls

'Large Scale' Rigging Claimed

BK2002161692 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Excerpts] The Congress-I is all set to sweep the Punjab elections. With about half the assembly results yet to come, the party is just 11 seats short of an absolute majority in the 117-member assembly. Of the 60 results declared so far, the Congress-I has bagged 48 seats; while the Bahujan Samaj Party [BSP] has won four assembly seats; the CPI [Communist Party of India] has won two; CPI-M [Marxist] one; BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] one, and the Akali Dal-Kabul two seats. Two seats have gone to independents. The Janata Dal has drawn a blank so far.

The first Lok Sabha result from the state has gone in favor of the Congress-I. The party candidate Mr. Gurcharan Singh Dadahur has been declared elected from the Sangrur Lok Sabha seats. Congress-I candidates are also leading in 11 of the remaining 12 Lok Sabha constituencies.

The Akali Dal-Kabul parliamentary board chairman, Captain Amrinder Singh, has been defeated in the Kharar assembly seat. Prominent among the winners are former deputy speaker of the state assembly, Mr. Gulzar Singh; former parliamentary secretary, Mr. Gurmet Singh; Former State Minister, Mr. Harcharan Singh Ajnala; and the president of the state Youth Congress-I, Mr Maninderjit Singh;—all Congress-I. Trade union leader and CPI-M candidate, Mr. Balwant Singh, has lost the election from (Ghanor) assembly constituency. The state Congress-I chief, Mr. Beant Singh is leading by over 4,000 votes in the Jullundhur cantonment seat. [passage omitted]

The Congress-I says it will form the government on its own and will not go for coalition with any other party. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi, the party general secretary, Dr. Rajendra Kumari Bajpai, said the people have voted for democracy and peace and it will be the Congress-I's effort to bring back normalcy to the troubled state.

The CPI-M and CPI have said the election results are not going to solve problems in Punjab. The CPI-M general secretary, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjit, told newsmen that without the involvement of the people in the election process, neither can extremists be isolated, nor peace restored. The CPI National Council secretary, Mr. Homi Daji, said his party has lodged a protest with the Election Commission alleging large-scale rigging in the elections by the Congress-I.

Congress-I Wins State Assembly Majority

BK2102011692 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0035 GMT 21 Feb 92

[All figures as heard]

[Excerpts] The Congress-I has won two-thirds majority in the Punjab state assembly, while the party has bagged all the seven Lok Sabha seats results of which were declared so far. Of the 114 assembly results declared so far, the Congress-I has won 85, the Bahujan Samaj Party has bagged nine, while the Bharatiya Janata Party has won six seats. Four seats have gone in favor of the CPI [Communist Party of India], while the Akali Dal-Kabul has bagged three. Of the Seven Lok Sabha results declared so far, the Congress-I has won all the seven. [Passage omitted on performance of individual candidates at various constituencies]

The Congress-I has said that it will form the government in Punjab on its own and will not have a coalition with any other party. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi, the party general secretary, Dr. Rajendra Kumari Bajpai, said the people in Punjab have voted for democracy and peace.

The Punjab PCCI [Pradesh—state—Congress Committee-I] president, Mr. Beant Singh, has described the Congress-I's victory in the elections as a victory of secular forces. He appealed to Akali leaders to join the democratic forces to fulfill the aspirations of the people in Punjab who want peace. He added that the Congress-I is committed to bring normalcy in the state and will try to bring the misguided youth back to the national mainstream.

The Andhra Pradesh chief minister, Mr. Janardhan Reddy, has hailed the victory of Congress-I in the elections to Lok Sabha and assembly in Punjab. He has congratulated the prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, for securing such a massive majority for the party. The former union minister and the Janata Dal leader, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, has accused the center of manipulating the assembly and parliamentary elections in Punjab. The Akali Dal-Kabul has convened a meeting of the party working committee in Chandigarh tomorrow to take stock of the post-election situation in the state.

Congress-I Takes 12 of 13 Lok Sabha Seats

BK2102093892 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] The results of all the 13 Lok Sabha seats are now available from Punjab. The Congress-I has claimed 12 seats while the Bahujan Samaj Party [BSP] has bagged one seat. With this victory, the Congress-I has raised its tally in the Lok Sabha to 244.

In Rupar reserve constituency, Mr. Harchand Singh of the Congress-I has been declared elected. He defeated his nearest Bahujan Samaj Party rival, Mr. Jaspal Singh, by a margin of 63,570 votes. In Ferozepore, the BSP candidate Dr. Mohan Singh has defeated the former state Congress-I president, Mr. Santok Singh Randhawa, by a margin of 1,296 votes.

As already reported, the Congress-I has been returned to power in Punjab with a thumping majority. Of the 117 assembly seats, the party has bagged 87 seats. The Bahujan Samaj Party has won nine, the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] six, Akali Dal-Kabul three, CPI four, and the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] and Janata Dal one seat each. Independents and others have claimed six seats.

The state Congress-I chief, Mr. Beant Singh, is reaching Chandigarh for consultations with senior party colleagues on ministry formation. Our Chandigarh correspondent understands that Mr. Beant Singh will also hold discussions with the party high command in New Delhi on the issue.

Commentary Hails Election Outcome

BK2102041192 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Commentary by Pushpa Sharoff of INDIAN EXPRESS]

[Text] A Congress-I government returns to Punjab after nearly a decade with the electorate giving a clear verdict that it wants the same party to govern in the state which rules at the center. The electorates' choice appears to have been influenced by the consideration that security measures taken by the center need to be continued. In a quick reaction to the poll outcome, the Congress-I leadership has held out the assurance that the Army would continue to be deployed in the state for some more time. It has also reiterated its commitment to implement the Rajiv-Longowal accord.

There was little doubt about the Congress-I's victory after the decision of major Akali factions to boycott the elections. The party has also done remarkably well in the Lok Sabha elections held simultaneously in the state. An immediate impact of this should be felt in the coming parliament session. There will be substantial increase in the strength of the ruling party in the Lok Sabha. That should add to the confidence of the Narasimha Rao government.

However, in its hour of euphoria, the Congress-I will do well to remember that a solution to the problems in Punjab is possible only with the cooperation of all other political parties, particularly those who contested the elections. A consensual approach is the need of the hour. Those who have boycotted the polls are unlikely to sit silently. In fact, they have already raised the bogey of rigging. At the same time, let it not be forgotten that if the Congress-I is to really win the hearts of Punjabis, it will be required to bury its past marked by inaction and failure to keep promises. The government has done well to initiate action against those guilty of the 1984 riots. Though belated, its action in observing silence at an all-party meeting in Delhi in the memory of those killed in these riots has been a good gesture. As an immediate measure, the party must clear confusion about its stand on the issue of transfer of Chandigarh in view of the conflicting positions of party units in different states.

No account of the unprecedented elections in Punjab will be complete without a reference to the courage of the electorate which have chosen to stand up and be counted in the face of open threats by Pakistan-inspired terrorists. In essentially a battle between the ballot and the bullet, they have tried to emphasize the supremacy of the former. Well done—is the only expression that readily comes to mind as one congratulates Punjabi voters.

Militants Kill Four People in Punjab 20 Feb

BK2102065092 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0435 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] In Punjab, militants shot dead four persons including two panchayat [village council] members in Barnala area of Sangrur District last night. The victims were going on a tractor when attacked near village (Rue Kalan).

Iran

U.S., Israel Warned al-Musawi Death To Be Avenged

LD2002172292 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] On behalf of the leader of the Islamic revolution, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, a memorial service was held this afternoon for the secretary general of the revolutionary movement of Lebanon's Hizballah, martyr Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Seyyed Abbas al-Musawi, his spouse and young child in the Martyr Mottahari College [Tehran]. Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Mohammadi Golpayegani, representing the leader of the Islamic Revolution; Mr. Karrubi, the Islamic Consultative Assembly speaker; Vice President Habibi, representing President Hashemi-Rafsanjani; several members of the Council of Guardians, the cabinet, Majlis deputies, the Imam's Office staff, and many civil servants and army staff, as well as members of various strata of the people were present.

A message from the Lebanese revolutionary Hizballah was read following religious chanting and breast-beating. The message says the great movement that has been created in Lebanon today is born out of the Islamic revolution, and the Iranian nation must be reassured that the tumultuous wave of sacred Islam in Lebanon is based on the beloved imam's [Khomeyni] line, and is steadfast—and will remain so—and is also based on the unity of all Muslims, and is in the light of obedience to the exalted leadership, his eminence, Ayatollah Khamene'i. This unity enables the Muslim Lebanese nation not to tire.

The message also emphasizes that America and Israel must realize that the blood of the worthy martyr will be avenged on them.

Later, Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Falsafi gave a speech enumerating the exalted characteristics of Hojjat ol-Eslam val- Moslemin Seyyed Abbas al-Musawi. He said: Islamic Iran is an independent country and is not reliant on the world. America fears Islam and the Islamic revolution more than the nuclear bomb. Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Falsafi added: The Lebanese nation must realize that one must retrieve one's rights, and that the nation must stand up to the criminal America so that it can live freely.

The service ended with prayers for the health of the leader of the Islamic revolution.

Memorial Service at Foreign Ministry

LD2002141892 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1230 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] A memorial service was held at the Foreign Ministry today to commemorate the memory of the great Lebanese struggler, 'Allamah Hojjat ol-Eslam Sayyid 'Abbas al-Musawi. The representative of the revolutionary movement of the Lebanese Hizballah and the Foreign Ministry's high-ranking officials were present at the ceremonies.

During the ceremonies the first deputy foreign affairs minister [unnamed; post currently held by 'Ali Mohammad Besharati] made some remarks commemorating the memory of the martyred scholar, Sayyid 'Abbas al-Musawi, and termed his martyrdom as the fruit of a fundamental struggle against the Zionist enemy. He said: No concession or compromise is permissable in that struggle and the struggle will continue until Holy Jerusalem is freed.

A memorial service was also held to commemorate the memory of martyr 'Abbas al-Musawi by the Ideological and Political Office of the Armed Forces General Headquarters [HQ] at its prayer house today. During the ceremonies Hojjat ol-Eslam Movahedi-Kermani, the head of the Ideological and Political Office of the Armed Forces General HQ, and Mr. Firuzabadi, the head of the Joint Staff, and high ranking commanders and officials of the Ideological and Political Office and the Joint Staff Command were present.

The deputy head of the Ideological and Political Office of the Armed Forces General HQ made some remarks. He condemned the occupiers of Palestine and invaders of the Lebanese territories' anti-humanitarian and terrorist actions.

Israel Said Seeking 'New Status Quo' in Lebanon

NC2002185192 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Unattributed political commentary]

[Text] The situation in south Lebanon has taken a turn for the worse following increased Zionist aggressions and reports that units from the Zionist land forces have advanced deep into south Lebanon and are moving north.

A statement issued by the UN Security Council reflected the international organization's concern over the recent violent events and massacres in south Lebanon. It called on the two parties to the conflict to exercise self-restraint and to halt this new phase of violent acts. The U.S. envoy, who chairs the current Security Council session, presented the draft of the above-mentioned statement. Sources close to the Security Council say that its recent statement on the situation in south Lebanon does not differ much from the one issued by the U.S. State Department on the same issue. The UN statement only denounced the recent events in south Lebanon but did not condemn the Israeli attacks.

The U.S. and Russian envoys tried to justify the weak stand taken by the Security Council on recent events in Lebanon by claiming that the adoption of a firm stance on these events would harm the new phase of the Middle East peace talks which are scheduled to begin in Washington next week. Everyone knows that the nature of the peace negotiations process and the nature of the Zionist stand during these negotiations prove how untrue these claims are. Israel's stand during all the negotiation phases, and despite all the optimistic statements made on the eve of every phase, has never gone beyond the framework of rejecting the Security Council resolutions on the occupied Palestinian territories and south Lebanon.

The basis for Lebanon's participation in the Middle East peace negotiations was the implementation of Security Council Resolution 425. But Israel used the presence of resistance forces in south Lebanon and its security affairs as an excuse to reject this resolution.

By exerting further pressure on Lebanon, the Zionist entity is seeking to impose a new status quo on this country; a status quo that would guarantee Tel Aviv's interests and ambitions. Every sign indicates that the Zionist entity is trying to exploit the current situation in Lebanon and the region, particularly following the closure of the hostage file, and to focus its attacks on and blows to the Islamic Resistance in south Lebanon in order to fabricate a new crisis in that country and create a new state of instability for the Lebanese Government, a new situation that would serve its interests and facilitate the means for fulfilling Tel Aviv's expansionist goals.

Israel 'Escapes' Condemnation

LD2002144792 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1100 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Good Day dear listeners. While southern Lebanon has been subjected for several consecutive days to the heavy and continuous artillery and aerial fire of the

aggressor Zionist regime, the United Nations Security Council issued a statement after a meeting called for by the government of Lebanon, merely expressing concern at the continuation of hostilities in that region. [passage omitted]

Some political analysts consider that the intensification of Israel's aggressions in South Lebanon and the dispatch of new Zionist military units equipped with heavy weapons to that region is a repeated conspiracy, the preliminary steps of which are aimed at throwing the region into a state of insecurity, forcing its inhabitants to go out into the streets.

The latest request made by Moshe Arens, the war minister of the Zionist regime, to Lebanon's armed forces that it should crush the anti-Zionist resistance in that country; and Israel's threat that it will make peoples' life intolerable in that region should this resistance continue, demonstrates the other objectives behind the Zionist regime's move to intensify this hostility and extend its aggression.

In spite of the fact that the officials in charge of the Zionist regime do not hide the aggressive nature of the motivations behind the furtherance of their aggressions in Southern Lebanon, the Security Council has, for political reasons, overlooked these blatant facts and by merely expressing concern, it has called on the aggressor and the aggressed not to use force against each other. Even though there is nothing new in this performance by the Security Council in the face of Israel's violation of peace, it eliminates many of the misconceptions that had arisen in the minds of some gullible persons after the oil war in the Persian Gulf.

Some governments and leaders in the world, influenced by the periodic Western propaganda at that point in time imagined that, from then onwards, the United Nations, having the good of the international community in mind, would play a more active role in solving international problems. But now, it has become clear to everyone that America obstructs such developments and endeavors to only take up certain problems—labeling them as international problems—when it is in the interest of Washington to do so.

What is evident is that the Security Council's silence in the face of the aggressions of the Zionist regime—influenced by America—leads that Council to distort the facts and weakens its international credibility. The emphasis placed by the Security Council, in its recent statement, on the need to respect the independence, territorial integrity, sovereignty, and national unity of Lebanon within the framework of recognized international borders, contradicts the non-condemnation of Israel. That regime, by continuing its aggression against Lebanon has violated all these priorities and during the past ten years it has refrained from implementing Security Council Resolution 425 concerning immediate withdrawal from the occupied region in southern Lebanon.

Today, no one has any doubts that the essential source of insecurity and hostility in the Middle East lies in state terrorism which Israel nakedly exemplifies. And according to the eminent leader of the Revolution, if some people are to be placed on a list as terrorists, the name of America should be recorded on that list first followed by that of her illegitimate offspring—the Zionist regime. And while this state terrorism is being supported by international terrorism—that is, by America—the region will not see any peace. Meanwhile, the reputation and honor of the Security Council, too, has and will be sacrificed for the interests of the interests and stances of America.

The daily massacre of the people of southern Lebanon or, the cooperation between arrogant power reveals the unity of the world of blasphemy against the Islamic ummah [community] more than ever. It also makes Muslims once again realize the fact that their religious brothers are not being massacred at the hands of aggressor Zionsts alone, but that America is also participating both militarily and politically in this massacre. In other words, the Zionist regime is killing and causing destruction in South Lebanon with American weapons; and—supported by America which is currently responsible for the policies of the Security Council—escapes any kind of condemnation.

*Belgian Cyclotron May Have Nuclear Uses

92P60129A Hasselt HET BELANG VAN LIMBURG in Dutch 12 Feb 92 p 1, 4

[Report by R.H.]

[Text] Iran has ordered a cyclotron from the Walloon company Ion Beam Applications. In the opinion of some, the Iranian regime can use this cyclotron, with adaptions and in combination with other apparatus, to enrich uranium for atom bombs.

Ion Beam Applications (IBA) claims that the cyclotron is only suited for medical purposes. Yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed that IBA received an export permit for the cyclotron last year.

The Belgian cyclotron is intended for the Karaj medical complex, which is about 30 km from Tehran.

Last week the mojahedin announced at a press conference in Washington that Iran was secretly working at five locations producing nuclear weapons.

The resistance cites sources of information inside the regime. China, France, Pakistan, Argentina and Italy, in addition to Belgium, are said to be assisting the Iranian nuclear program, which is spread over five places in Iran.

In a conversation with this paper's editors on Monday evening [10 February], mojahedin spokesman Alizero Jafarzadeh said that Iran "is indeed building a medical center in Karaj but this center is large-scale camouflage. Tehran intends to establish in Karaj a secret installation

for producing nuclear weapons. Of course the government does not want to do this openly. Nevertheless, several spokesmen of the government have repeatedly said that Tehran wants its own nuclear weapons."

Surprise

Last week during a press conference in Washington, the mojahedin announced that Iran is secretly working in five locations making nuclear weapons. Companies from China, France, Pakistan, Argentina, Italy and also Belgium are said to be involved in supplying parts and technology. In connection with the purchase of the Belgian cyclotron it is noteworthy that an official report to the Iranian leader Rafsanjani contains the phrase: "To our great surprise, we could obtain quite easily from the Belgians what we could not get elsewhere." The people at IBA said that this is obvious: "Our company is the only one in the world that produces this sort of cyclotron."

Spokesman Jafarzadeh insists that the Belgian cyclotron, in combination with other nuclear installations, can indeed be used in the Iranian nuclear weapons program.

IBA director Jongen maintains that the cyclotron can only be used for medical purposes. Other scientists say that it is theoretically possible to use components of the cyclotron for purposes other than medical—namely the production of enriched uranium, which is necessary to make nuclear weapons. "However, that is a theoretical possibility" we were told.

IBA director Yves Jongen says that the company's cyclotron "has never been used for military purposes. The isotopes, which can be produced by this cyclotron, are only for medical use or for research in agricultural and industrial applications. Even if you tamper with the equipment, you cannot use it for military purposes." IBA also produces calutrons. Jongen: "We would never sell them to countries like Iran."

Positive Opinion

The spokesman in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs pointed out that the IBA export permit is entirely valid: "At the time, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs gave a positive opinion on the granting of a permit for IBA, because the change in the production method would require an enormous transformation cost, and because the equipment is not on the nuclear lists for which there are export restrictions." The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also stressed that there is no nuclear cooperation between Belgium and Iran.

According to Iranian resistance, the regime has purchased a calutron (an adapted version of the cyclotron) in China. This was confirmed yesterday by an independent source. This calutron is said to enable Iran to make small amounts of enriched uranium (the basis of the atomic bomb). To increase the production of enriched uranium, Tehran is said to be duplicating the Chinese calutrons on a large scale.

Laborious

The uranium for the first American atomic bomb (the Manhattan Project in Oak Ridge) was produced by a modified cyclotron (a so-called calutron or California University cyclotron). Today this method is regarded as too laborious and too expensive. This did not prevent the Iraqi regime of Saddam Husayn from enriching uranium by using this method, among others, until the end of last year. Saddam also tried to enrich uranium by chemical means and by the gas centrifuge method, the most commonly use method today.

The biggest disadvantage of the calutron method to enrich uranium is that it consumes enormous quantities of electricity. Thus it is no coincidence that the installations in Karaj are located a stone's throw away from the Karaj dam, where the hydroelectric power plant generates a large amount of electricity.

Inspection

On 6 February, at the invitation of the Iranian regime, a team from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna went to Iran to inspect the existing nuclear facilities in the country. Up until now it had been assumed that Iran, which signed the Nonproliferation Treaty in 1968, was not in a position to enrich enough uranium to produce an atomic bomb.

Iran only granted access to three nuclear reactors, which are used for applied research. It is not clear whether the IAEA team will gain access to other nuclear sites.

The mission of the IAEA team is regarded as a test of the credibility of the agency, especially since the IAEA was not able to inform the world opinion in time about the nuclear plans of Saddam Husayn of Iraq.

Five Sites of Iranian Nuclear Projects

According to the Iranian resistance in Washington, Iran is in the process of producing nuclear weapons in the greatest secrecy at five locations. These five places are indicated on the adjacent map [not reproduced].

- Isfahan is located in Central Iran and is thus safer from a foreign military attack than places located nearer to the border. The complex is built in the form of a city district and some buildings are camouflaged. Some of the installations are underground. Isfahan already has a small nuclear reactor and the regime is said to be seeking parts for a bigger reactor.
- Karaj is presented to the outside world as a medical center. All buildings are designed so that they can withstand a military attack. The Belgian cyclotron is destined for Karaj. The Chinese calutron is said to have already been installed in Karaj.
- Gorgan is near the Caspian Sea. Iran is said to have purchased from Turkmenistan (a former Soviet republic) two 450-megawatt reactors to install in Gorgan.
- Darkhovin is located 50 km to the northeast of

Abadan. The regime calls this project the "Karoun Plan" and it is regularly visited by Chinese experts.
- Moa'alem Kelayeh is located 120 km northwest of Tehran. To keep this project secret, the authorities tried to prevent any foreign company from participating.

Velayati on 'New Strategic Balance' in Region

NC2102092092 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Report on comments by Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati from the "Political Roundtable" program; date not given]

[Text] Foreign Minister Velayati stressed the fundamental role played by member countries of the Economic Cooperation Organization, ECO, in the regional and international scene, saying: We will attain a new strategic balance in the region, and the first basic step toward creating this strategic balance was the convocation of the ECO summit in Tehran.

Referring to cooperation among the five countries of the Caspian Sea region, Velayati said: The first outcome of the preliminary session of the Caspian Sea organization was that Turkmenistan agreed to open the region of (Karehbogaz) and allow the waters of the Caspian Sea to flow into that gulf. Forecasts by our experts in the Ministry of Energy say this will cause the water level of the Caspian Sea to fall by 40-70 cms.

Our foreign minister, who was speaking on the Political Roundtable program of the IRIB Television Second Network, stated that U.S. efforts to prevent cooperation among regional Muslim nations and countries within the framework of the ECO and the Caspian Sea organization are fruitless. He added:

We are seeking a balanced relationship based on reciprocal respect and equal rights for all the countries including those of Central Asia and the Transcaucasus, and the United States or any other power cannot resist the historical trend of cooperation among regional Muslim countries and nations.

President's Message Read at Afghan Shiite Assembly

NC2102070592 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] The third assembly of the Shiites of Afghanistan opened yesterday on the auspicious birth anniversary of the Lord of the Ages—may God expedite his noble advent—with the reading of a message by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

The president discussed current regional developments and described the situation in Afghanistan as improved, stressing: It would be advisable for the Afghan factions and Muslim groups to think of the final solution of the Afghanistan issue as their main objective.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani added: Islam is the most important desire of the Afghan nation. Any government that does not keep this in mind will have no place in that country.

The president recalled the longstanding relations of the two nations and said: The Islamic Republic of Iran has stood alongside the people of Afghanistan in every stage of their jihad and it can play a fundamental role in the reconstruction and economic and social expansion of Afghanistan.

Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Ebrahimi, the Leader of the Revolution's deputy, presided over the inaugural session of the third assembly of the Shiites of Afghanistan. Borhaneddin Rabbani, the leader of the Jami'at-e Eslami-ye Afghanistan party, stated that the objective of all mojahedin groups in Afghanistan is the establishment of an Islamic government, adding: The presence of Sunni mojahedin leaders in the Shiite assembly is an indication of the unity of the word of the Muslim Afghan nation for the attainment of their hallowed objectives.

Nepal & Bhutan

Koirala Addresses National Day Rally 19 Feb

BK1902155792 Hong Kong AFP in English 1533 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] Kathmandu, Feb 19 (AFP)—Nepal Wednesday celebrated its 42nd National Democracy Day with various social, political, and cultural programmes nationwide including a rally here during which five youths were arrested, officials said.

The five were arrested when they shouted anti-monarchial and anti-government slogans during a rally here to mark the occassion.

A police source said the youths tried to disrupt a speech by Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala. They also whistled and shouted as a military band was playing the national anthem in the presence of King Birendra who was also at the rally.

More than 15,000 people attended the rally at the army pavilion sponsored by the National Democratic Celebration Committee headed by the prime minister.

In his speech Koirala said the road to democracy was "arduous, long, and sensitive. Democracy demands tolerance and hard work. Nepal has to cross a long road with patience to reach the goal of democracy."

He appealed to all people and political parties to have "patience, honesty, and commitment to the principles of democracy so that the fruits of democracy can be distributed to the poorer sections of the Nepalese society," an official said.

He also thanked the king for his cooperation in allowing the setting of a constitutional monarchy and the creation of a democratic government.

In a message to his people King Birendra said 41 years ago democracy was introduced to the country thanks to the "the sacrifice, suffering, and struggle waged by the Nepali people.

"It is fitting that we celebrate this day as the National Democracy Day and commemorate with gratitute the contribution of our grandfather, the late King Tribhuvan and all other brave Nepalis who were in the forefront of the struggle for democracy," he added.

"We are engaged in the process of consolidating democracy, a process which is nurtured by the core values of democracy and requires that liberty encompasses all aspects of national life," he said.

Wednesday's celebrations included an amnesty for 129 prisoners.

The prisoners had already completed at least two-thirds of their sentences and all had been convicted of criminal offences, a Home Ministry official said, adding there were no political prisoners in Nepal.

Later Wednesday Koirala hosted a reception at the Royal Guest House attended by the King and Queen Aishwarya, members of the royal family, ministers, leaders of various political parties and high ranking civil and military officers.

Nepal was ruled by a family of hereditary Rana prime ministers until 1951 when agitation by the Nepali Congress (NC) party led to a return of the royal family represented by King Tribhuvan.

The NC won an overwhelming victory in 1959 general elections, but in late 1960 King Mahendra, who succeeded King Tribhuvan, inaugurated personal rule through a partyless Panchayat system.

King Mahendra died in January 1972 and was succeeded by King Birendra who was officially crowned in 1975.

Following a violent campaign by the NC and leftwing parties in 1990 in which scores died in clashes with security forces, King Birendra conceded sovereignty and Nepal became a constitutional monarchy with a multiparty parliament under an NC government.

Double-Digit Inflation 'Serious Problem'

BK1802154892 Hong Kong AFP in English 1531 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Kathmandu, Feb 18 (AFP)—Finance Minister Mahesh Acharya told a meeting of Nepal's aid donors that runaway inflation still threatens the economy, despite higher export earnings and development spending, official radio said Tuesday.

Addressing a one-day conference Monday at the Finance Ministry, Acharya said double-digit inflation remained a serious problem and called on donors to increase economic aid to the Himalayan kingdom, notably program aid and commodity assistance.

"The ruling Nepali Congress government is still in a difficult phase and we continue to require considerable external assistance for economic restructuring and (to) lift the economy of the rural poor," he was quoted as saying.

The conference included ambassadors from Japan, Germany, Britain and the United States and envoys from Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Italy, Netherlands, Switzerland and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Also attending were local representatives of various United Nations and international financial institutions.

Inflation has risen sharply because of a 1989-90 trade blockade by India which forced Nepalese industry to drastically cut back production because of shortages of raw materials.

The government's decision to devalue the currency by 22 percent in July last year also helped fuel inflation, which was runing at 21 percent during fiscal 1991 [which] ended mid-July and is expected to further rise during the current fiscal year, according to the central bank.

However, during fiscal 1990-91 exports to countries like Singapore, Hong Kong and the European Community rose by more than 55 percent compared with the previous year and are expected to continue to grow because of the ending of the India blockade and a more liberal export and industrial policy locally.

Former Panchayat Activists Form Political Party

BK2002010292 Hong Kong AFP in English 1746 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] Kathmandu, Feb 19 (AFP)—Former Panchayat activists Wednesday ended a three-day meeting by announcing the formation of a new political party, the Rastriya Janata Paishad (RJP).

More than 600 people from across the kingdom also elected former prime minister Matrika Prasad Koirala, who is the half-brother of Nepal's current Nepali Congress Prime Minister G.P. Koirala, as the new party's chairman.

Shri Bhadra Sharma, a former general secretary of the Nepali Congress, has become the new party's coordinator, a party spokesman said.

The RJP's founding coincided with Nepal's 42nd National Democracy Day.

The partyless Panchayat system of government prevailed in Nepal until 1990 when popular unrest led to a

constitutional monarchy and free multi-party elections won by the Nepali Congress.

At a press conference, RJP chairman Koirala alleged that the Nepali Congress, the National Democratic Party and Nepal Communist Party (United Marxist and Leninist) had failed "to fulfill the aspirations of the people."

"This obliged us to create a new democratic party with prime objectives of full commitment to democracy and a democratic way of life and commitment to the principles of nationalism, democracy, equality without discrimination of caste and creed for development," Koirala said.

Asked whether the RJP would contest general elections due in 1996, Koirala replied: "We have not formed the party for the lusture of the political power, but for the people's support and acceptance."

"The new party's policies and programmes... aim at achieving organizational, oppositional and creative programmes to be formulated by the (RJP's) central committee," he said.

Koirala said the RJP would support government programmes which, in its view, would benefit the public and nation, "but we oppose to issues which serve against the national interest."

On foreign policy, the RJP warned the Nepali Congress against allowing foreign countries to use Nepalese soil for ulterior purposes—a reference to Nepal's landlocked position between powerful neighbours China and India.

Mongolian Vice President, Delegation Arrive

BK1402161292 Hong Kong AFP in English 1601 GMT 14 Feb 92

[Text] Kathmandu, Feb 14 (AFP)—Mongolia's Vice President Radnaasumbereliyn Gonchigdorj arrived here Friday on a four-day goodwill visit leading a four member delegation, officials said.

A group of the Nepalese Parliamentarians representing the ruling Nepali Congress, the Nepal Communist Party (United Marxist and Leninist) and the National Democratic Party were present at the airport to receive him.

The main purpuse of Gonchigdorj's visit is to study Nepal's multi-party parliamentary government system and to exchange views on bilateral ties with Nepalese leaders.

During his visit here Gonchigdorj is scheduled to confer with the speaker of the House of Representatives, Daman Nath Dhungana, the Chairman of the National Assembly (Upper House), Beni Bahadur Karki, and meet Nepalese parliamentarians, the officials said.

Nepal and Mongolia last month signed a bilateral trade and economic cooperation agreement for five years in order to help develop bilateral trade.

Delegation Departs; Visit 'Successful'

BK1802154092 Hong Kong AFP in English 1521 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Kathmandu, Feb 18 (AFP)—A visiting four-member Mongolian parliamentary delegation led by parliamentary chairman and Vice President Radnaasumbereliyn Gonchigdorj left here Tuesday for home after a four-day visit, the foreign ministry said.

The vice president told reporters before leaving his visit was "highly successful and useful" as it had given him a good opportunity to exchange views with Nepalese leaders and parliamentarians from both houses.

Gonchigdorj also said a high level Nepalese parliamentary delegation would visit Mongolia in "the coming months." He did not give an exact date.

During his stay Gonchigdurj held talks with Prime Minister G.P. Koirala, Parliamentary Speaker Daman Dhunga, the Chairman of the National Assembly (Upper House) Beni Bahadur Karki and a group of MPs representing different parties, the ministry said.

Pakistan

Government To Seek World Support on Kashmir

BK2102114892 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] The secretary general of foreign affairs, Mr. Akram Zaki, has said Pakistan will be sending special envoys in the near future to the member-countries of the Security Council and other important members of the international community to invoke their support for finding a peaceful settlement of the Kashmir problem. Speaking at the Pakistan Institute of International Affairs in Karachi on recent developments in the foreign policy of Pakistan, he said the present government has highlighted the Kashmir issue on the international level and the prime minister has engaged the Indian Government in a constructive dialogue to solve the problem. Mr. Akram Zaki said parliaments of the world and various international forums have condemned the atrocities perpetrated by the Indian forces on innocent civilians in occupied Kashmir and demanded to give the Kashmiris their right to self-determination. He hoped the world community and the Security Council would realize their responsibility in solving this problem, just as they have resolved the Namibian, Cambodian, and other international problems earlier.

Army Chief—No Compromise on Kashmir

BK2102091292 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 21 Feb 92 p 12

[Text] Islamabad—Chief of Army Staff [COAS], General Asif Nawaz has said that positive results of his visit to US have started appearing. "I talked to American officials with dignity, upholding national honour. Now they

understand our point of view better," said General Asif Nawaz here Thursday [20 February].

The COAS was talking to The News at a wedding reception. Asif Nawaz said that his visit was not aimed at getting US aid for Pakistan but to restore the broken links between the two countries. He said that we have compromised neither on Kashmir nor on Afghanistan.

Australia 'Disturbed' at Nuclear Declaration

BK2102083292 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 21 Feb 92 p 12

[Text] Islamabad—Australia is deeply disturbed by Pakistan's admission to possession of nuclear weapons capability, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Senator Gareth Evans said Thursday.

A press release issued here said that despite earlier repeated denials of the existence of a nuclear weapons research and development program, Pakistan's foreign secretary, Mr Shaharyar Khan, last week said in Washington that Pakistan now possesses all the components and technological expertise to assemble nuclear weapons.

"While the Pakistani foreign secretary appears to have been deliberately frank about his country's nuclear weapons program, which we welcome after years of statements which were less than this, Australia is nevertheless concerned about this confirmation of the international community's suspicions,' Senator Evans said. 'Pakistan's admission has essentially the same significance as India's detonation of a nuclear explosive device in 1974.

"Neither act contributed to the security of South Asia, and both challenge the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, which the overwheling majority of the community of nations subscribes to as fundamental to their security.'

"Pakistan's programme runs starkly counter to the current dramatic global disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation progress being experienced.

"Australia hopes that the greater transparency that now exists about the Pakistani nuclear weapons program will provide a basis for winding back and eliminating the nuclear rivalry in the region. Australia is optimistic that the curent five power proposal may provide an acceptable basis for progress."

The United States is currently seeking agreement to talks which would involve India, Pakistan, China, Russia, and the United States in a wide-ranging exchange on security and nuclear non-proliferation issues on the subcontinent. Senator Evans said that Australia did welcome assurance by Pakistan that it had frozen its nuclear device, and that it would not transfer sensitive nuclear technology to third countries.

Sri Lanka

15 Soldiers, 12 'Terrorists' Killed in Batticaloa

BK1502114092 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] The security forces with the strength of one platoon confronted a group of approximately 150 terrorists in the Batticaloa district yesterday, resulting in a fierce firefight which lasted for about one and half hours. The Joint Operations Command in a communique said that reinforcements were rushed to the scene from the army detachment at Chenkaladi and engaged the terrorists, inflicting heavy casualties. The terrorists started fleeing in all directions, carrying their wounded with the arrival of reinforcements. Air Force helicopters spotted a group of fleeing terrorists numbering between 20 and 25 and engaged them. During the firefight, 15 soldiers were killed and three were injured. It has been confirmed that 12 terrorists, including a subgroup leader named Latif, were killed during the firefight. According to the communique, the death toll of the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] is estimated to be much higher since the terrorists were fleeing in all directions carrying their dead and the injured. It is learned that due to intensified operations in the eastern jungles, these groups of terrorists had attempted to avoid the onslaught of the advancing troops. In the process, they had confronted the security forces' (?passing) patrol, resulting in the firefight. Meanwhile, a LANKAPUVATH report says government troops killed seven LTTE terrorists and cleared two LTTE bases in the Batticaloa district.

Offensive Against LTTE Planned in Jaffna

BK2002135492 Hong Kong AFP in English 1141 GMT 20 Feb 92

[Text] Colombo, Feb 20 (AFP)—Airforce planes dropped leaflets over a Tamil guerrilla stronghold in northern Sri Lanka, warning civilians to move out of the area to avoid a possible military offensive, officials said Thursday.

The leaflets were dropped Wednesday over the Jaffna peninsula which is virtually under the control of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

It warned people to get away from rebel targets immediately, a defence official said.

"People have been asked to move into temples and churches because the military does not want civilians to get caught in a crossfire," the official said amid reports that troops were poised for a showdown in Jaffna.

There has been long debate in military and political circles over the wisdom of launching such an offensive around Jaffna town because of the risk of heavy civilian and military casualties.

Meanwhile, suspected LTTE gunmen shot dead a woman and her daughter and another man at a village in eastern Sri Lanka Thursday as security forces continued search operations in the region, police said.

They said they were shot as they were on their way to collect food given by the government to low-income and undernourished families in eastern Ampara district.

A military spokesman also reported that one soldier was killed and three others wounded in a suspected LTTE attack on an army outpost just south of the Jaffna peninsula Thursday.

The LTTE is fighting to establish a separate state in northeast Sri Lanka where a two million Tamil minority is concentrated.

Colombo Recognizes 10 CIS Countries

BK1502091492 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0821 GMT 15 Feb 92

["OANA/pool" Item]

[Text] Colombo, 15 Feb (LANKAPUVATH)—Sri Lanka on Wednesday [12 February] recognised the remaining 10 republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the new grouping of 11 of the 15 states that formed the former Soviet Union. The Russian Federation, the largest of the group, was recognised on December 28.

The 10 states are Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine.

In its message of recognition to these states, the government has conveyed its keenness to develop mutually beneficial relations, a Foreign Ministry release states.

Government To Undertake New Economic Planning

BK1602092292 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0721 GMT 16 Feb 92

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 16 Feb (LANKAPUVATH)—President Ranasinghe Premadasa yesterday said his government was now undertaking an economic plan which would not make the rich richer nor poor but make them invest in projects that would generate employment to the poor and generally benefit the masses of the country. The president was speaking at a meeting held to commemorate the third anniversary of the present paliament at the proposed new Gampaha sports stadium at Bodiraja Mawatha, Gampaha, states today's SUNDAY OBSERVER. The president said earlier the country's economic system was geared to help certain families to enjoy unlimited benefits from their investments. Under the new system of economic planning the dividends of investments would benefit the masses at grassroot level in the village.

The president paid special tribute to electors who voted at the last two elections. He said for democracy to function the people had to cast their vote and elect the party which would solve their problems and grievances. At the 1977 elections the people gave the UNP [United National Party] an overwhelming mandate because the previous government was an inefficient one where there were scarcities and shortages of all items. The then leader of the UNP, former President J.R. Jayewardene, introduced the open economic polices. In 1982 inflation came down and there was an eight per cent growth of the economy recorded. Inflation caused the high cost of living and in order to combat inflation large scale development projects were necessary. Unfortunately in 1983 with the outbreak of terrorist activities funds that should have been spent on development had to be spent on an unwanted war. The JVP [Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna], taking advantage of the situation spread their subversive activities impeding the work of the government. Public property was destroyed, schools were closed, universities were shut, the export-import economy was affected and there was chaos in the country. The JVP also misled the country's youth and said it was only a dictatorship that could solve the problems of youth. If the people did not give the UNP a clear mandate at the elections the JVP would have established a total dictatorship where fundamental human rights would have been suppressed and there would have been a "one-man show". He said the government was committed to the fact that kind of thing would not recur, and the only means the government had to prevent such a state of affairs was reliance on the intelligence of the voter.

Referring to the north-east problem, he said the people there were yearning for the return of the civil administration. Several parts of the north and east were already under normal civil administration. Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in India had now started returning to their motherland in large numbers. This was very encouraging. There were certain sections which were criticising the government for trying to bring a solution to the ethnic problem. The only alternative they said was to defeat the UNP and destroy Premadasa and not to offer any political, economic or social program as was now being offered by the government.

New Business Policy Improves Performance

BK1702091292 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0805 GMT 17 Feb 92

["OANA/Pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 17 Feb (LANKAPUVATH)—The actively-pursued programme of peoplization of public enterprises since 1990 by the Sri Lankan government has been producing fruitful results.

A spokesman for the Central Bank of Sri lanka told LANKAPUVATH that this new industrial strategy of the government has tremendously motivated employees by making them partners.

He said it also has infused modern technology, improved management efficiency and product quality and the overall performance of the enterprises.

Peoplization of public enterprises has also helped to reduce the pressures on the government budget. Budgetary transfers to public sector enterprises amounted to Rs. [Rupees] 11 million in 1990, showing a decrease of 71 per cent when compared with 1989, the spokesman said.

Foreign Firms Kept From Controlling Plantations

BK2102111692 Hong Kong AFP in English 0908 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Text] Colombo, Feb 21 (AFP)—The Sri Lankan Government has rejected all applications from foreign companies to take over the management of lucrative plantations offered to the private sector, the tea trade said Friday.

Trade sources said the government had shortlisted 45 local firms to bid for the 22 state-owned tea, rubber and coconut estates, eliminating some 75 companies which came in with foreign collaboration.

"Now it is up to the local companies to make offers to take over the management of the plantations," a trade official said. The plantation sector is the mainstay of Sri Lanka's economy.

The ownership of the debt-ridden plantation companies would remain with the government but the management of them would be given to private companies on the basis of competitive bids.

Opposition groups had criticised the plan, saying that it would lead to foreign interests taking control of the country's economy and vast areas of agricultural land.

However, Prime Minister Dingiri Banda Wijetunga in a policy shift earlier in the week announced that foreign companies will not be allowed to bid.

"No foreign company will be allowed to participate. The government will not enter into any agreement with any foreign company," Wijetunga said in a statement to parliament Tuesday.

No deadline has been fixed to transfer the management of the plantations to the private sector.

The government policy towards the plantations is in sharp contrast to the ongoing open privatisation of dozens of manufacturing and service enterprises that are being sold to foreign interests.